COUNCIL on BUSINESS & SOCIETY

GLOBAL VOICE MAGAZINE

CSR's ripple effect on workplace dynamics

Impact investing as perceived by the wealthy

Is your company socially responsible enough?

Better Together: Intergenerational collaboration

Climate Change: The biggest impediment to child rights in Kenya

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

YES, PEAS

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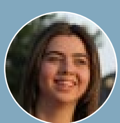

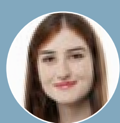


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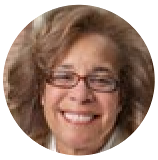

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/EDITORIAL

Sure, the readers of our magazine do not need a presentation of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). The tool, and indeed, the concept of different, simultaneous, yet complementary corporate results is well known. This is the kind of common knowledge that we take for granted in any business conversation. However, it always helps to have some historical perspective about the TBL, why it was created and what really remains of it today. TBL is forever associated with John Elkington, a business author and consultant, who popularised this tool in his now classic book, published in 1997.

At the time, the idea was revolutionary. Companies should not be measured solely on their financial results, that is, their economic bottom line. They would also need to achieve good results in two other bottom lines: environmental and social ones. At least, a company should not be profitable (positive economic bottom line) because it is, for instance, polluting (negative bottom line) or not treating their employees well (negative bottom line). Otherwise said, the TBL alerts about the tensions between profits and sustainability. Furthermore, it reminds us of the risk of cross-subsidisation among the three bottom lines. Not only the economic bottom line, but all the three of them should be positive.

As any other human invention, the TBL has its share of limitations. Some of them are well known. For instance, the time perspective is not present. While economic results happen right now, environmental and social results may take years to realise, and in any case, remain far more difficult to grasp and measure.

Moreover, comparisons among the three kind of results are conceptually impossible, and no one would like to engage in trade-offs among them (for instance, less social results in exchange for more environmental results). Indeed, the same Elkington, some years ago, called for a "recall" of his idea, claiming that it has been badly used.

In any case, as it happens with any well-intentioned inspiration, what matters is what we learn out of it. I would say that the TBL had the merit of illustrating the tensions between economic objectives and other, non-financial objectives. These tensions, which correspond to the complexity of leading a coalition of shareholders and stakeholders, remain at the heart of today's management. At the CoBS, we are aware of such tensions, of such complexity. Students in our schools can no longer learn those elegant, abstract, idealised economic models that assumed pure economic maximisation. Those models may be nice, but they fail to represent the new economic and social realities. That is precisely why the Global Voice magazine has something to say, in this moment of change, challenge and hope.

Welcome to the new edition of the GV.

Professor Adrian Zicari,
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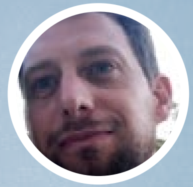
OUR CONTRIBUTORS
BRAINS THAT HAVE BRAWN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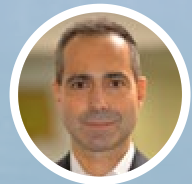
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HOW CSR GROWS AND RESONATES WITHIN FIRMS: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE CSR AND FUNCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS

> **The goal of CSR departments is to lead and guide functional departments to reach autonomy in how they embody and enact CSR.**

Professor **Tommaso Ramus, ESSEC Business School,** together with colleagues **David Risi** and **Christopher Wickert** address the issue of the CSR department-functional department interface within the firm and how both can work together to implement impactful CSR practices throughout the corporation.

Related research: *Coordinated Enactment: How Organizational Departments Work Together to Implement CSR, David Risi, Christopher Wickert, Tommaso Ramus,* ***Business & Society 2023, Vol. 62(4) 745–786, SAGE Journals.***

CSR IMPLEMENTATION UNVEILED

In the quest for corporate social responsibility, we often only see the tip of the iceberg – the CSR departments, the public commitments, the grand gestures. But beneath the surface lies a coordinated system involving the entire organization, where functional departments, such as accounting, human resources, and procurement, can play their vital roles.

Profs. Ramus, Risi, and Wickert investigate the collaboration between CSR departments and functional departments, revealing the evolving stages that companies undergo from CSR centralization to autonomy.

EVOLVING THROUGH STAGES: THE PROGRESSION OF CSR IMPLEMENTATION

The creation of a CSR department is not merely a public statement. Neither is it to simply take the role of implementer of new regulations and procedures. Moreover, its purpose is to act as a "filter" between the external demands for CSR implementation and the needs and operations of the corporation. This comes in a context in which responsible leadership is increasingly becoming a regular issue in the corporate sphere, with companies subject to both internal and external expectations.

Indeed, CSR departments are created to decipher public demands and interests and embed standard responsible practices throughout the entire organization. However, the ability for departments to work together has been found to vary depending on the implementation stage.

Profs. Ramus, Risi and Wickert identify three different stages: Nascent, Intermediate, and Mature built on a comparative study involving seven Swiss financial institutions that already have CSR departments in place. These three steps can then be divided into six courses of action: *centralizing, coalescing, decentralizing, orchestrating, tailoring, and consulting.* Each of these steps marks a more established CSR department. This is not to say that the CSR department has a major influence or a say in implementation – indeed, the researchers found that the goal of CSR departments is to lead and guide functional departments and company operations to reach autonomy in how they embody and enact CSR.

BUILDING A CSR FOUNDATION

At a nascent stage, typically, a CSR department has recently been created in the company. This specific step is referred to as *centralizing.* From its name, one can deduce that CSR is contained in the department, with its primary role being to identify relevant CSR issues and develop necessary regulations and operations to implement in the company. Unlike the later stages of CSR implementation, it this stage it is the CSR department that manages not only the overarching strategy but also the operations to implement it. As such, this role carries a lot of weight, with initiatives often supported by a 50% increase in budget and staff.

The *Coalescing* step aims to keep the operations of the company's functions in line with the pre-identified CSR objectives. Typically, this is when the CSR department starts to discuss with functional departments. Two main objectives must be met in this stage: first, to spread knowledge of what CSR means to the company and why it is important, and second, to gain valuable information about functional departments to obtain a better understanding of their needs. The nascent stage is imperative, as it is the foundation to continue with and eventually lead to the full autonomy of functional departments.

EMPOWERING FUNCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS

The Intermediate Stage provides functional departments with some responsibility and freedom. This stems from the *coalescing* step that customizes CSR practices for each functional department. *Decentralizing* takes a step forward with CSR departments not enacting objectives, but rather the functional departments working on suggestions provided to implement CSR in their day-to-day activities.

The fact that functional departments increasingly take over CSR enactments often means a reduction in budget and staff in the CSR department. *Decentralizing's* goal is to enable a better understanding of CSR and adapt it to the different functionalities of a corporation. Next, before moving onto the Mature Stage, CSR departments undergo the *orchestrating* step. Here, the functional departments now bear full responsibility for identifying market opportunities offered by social and environmental issues. As such, the role of the CSR department is solely to provide expertise and guidelines to align their goals with the company's CSR commitment. This includes web-based training, information events and CSR training.

AUTONOMOUS ACTION FOR GREATER CSR OWNERSHIP AND IMPACT

In contrast to the nascent and intermediate stages, the mature stage creates a strong separation between the CSR department and the functional departments. Functional departments are seen to act on their own with the past guidance of the CSR department. The Mature stage begins with *tailoring.*

This is very similar to the *decentralizing* step, but in this case the CSR department does not have as strong an involvement in the inclusion of CSR commitments. Nevertheless, functional departments still align their initiatives with the company's CSR commitment. Finally, the CSR department completely steps back in the final step of *consulting.* The department's role switches from conductor to advisor, with the CSR department only intervening when approached by functional departments and offering context to any current socio-environmental issues.

As such, because there are fewer interactions between these departments, the CSR team adopts a research-role dimension. In this light, functional departments take complete control by customizing CSR goals for their specific needs and, if guidance is needed, the CSR department is available to offer suggestions.

CSR: A COORDINATED FUTURE

So what about that tip of the CSR iceberg? Is CSR the only child of a dedicated CSR department? It seems not. For firms to be able to make impactful public commitments and play an active part in positive social and environmental change, CSR must be let to fly with its own wings. And this is best done by adopting a coordinating role and progressively stepping back and giving ownership to the departments – accounting, HR, procurement among others – which drive the operations of the firm. ///

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Coordinated CSR Implementation:** Corporate social responsibility implementation is a coordinated effort involving not only CSR departments but also functional departments such as accounting, human resources, and procurement. CSR implementation is a coordinated enactment, challenging the notion that CSR responsibility falls entirely on CSR departments.
- **Evolution of CSR Departments:** CSR departments' role evolves through stages, from centralizing to orchestrating, tailoring, and consulting. The CSR department's aim is not to control but to guide functional departments and help them become self-sufficient in implementing CSR practices.
- **Balance in CSR Perspectives:** This research underscores the importance of recognizing the evolving roles of functional departments in CSR implementation. It encourages a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both the initial role of CSR departments and the increasing involvement of functional departments as CSR practices mature within a company.

PEOPLE ANALYTICS: THE RISKS BEHIND THE PROMISES

> **Most studies address the promises of people analytics, while the quirks, negative implications and associated risks receive little attention.**

With the recent developments in AI, the supremacy of algorithms and analytics in the management of business – and people – seems more and more obvious in terms of driving up the performance of organisations. But should human beings be analysed in the same way as inventory entries? A research team including Dr. **Ulrich Leicht-Deobald, Trinity Business School,** and his collaborators Dr. **Lisa Marie Giermindl,** Dr. **Franz Strich,** Dr. **Oliver Christ,** and **Abdullah Redzepi** uncovers new findings on the risks of people analytics.

Related research: *Lisa Marie Giermindl, Franz Strich, Oliver Christ, Ulrich Leicht-Deobald & Abdullah Redzepi (2022) The dark sides of people analytics: reviewing the perils for organisations and employees, European Journal of Information Systems, 31:3, 410-435, DOI:10.1080/0960085X.2021.1927213*

Perhaps you have seen it in the Harvard Business Review or another business-oriented magazine: people analytics seems to be the ultimate efficiency solution for the agile company of the 21st century. The promises of data-driven decision-making when it comes to human resources can be summarized as such: exploiting large quantities of data through complex algorithms in order to make optimum, efficient, and unbiased use of employees and their potential for added value. But is it that simple?

Whether you're a manager or an employee, you're probably already exposed to some degree of integration of people analytics into your organisation's decision-making. In their research, Giermindl, Strich, Christ, Leicht-Deobald, and Redzepi put forward new elements that enable employees and their firms to take stock of the state of maturity of their people analytics systems and the risks associated with them. Knowing so will allow both to move towards a more appropriate reliance on people analytics in the company's decision-making processes.

THE GOLDEN ASSUMPTIONS BEHIND PEOPLE ANALYTICS

To understand the perils of people analytics and their negative implications for organisations and employees, Giermindl, Strich, Christ, Leicht-Deobald, and Redzepi analysed dozens of documents from various databases relating to information systems, organisational behaviour or human resources management, identifying five emerging themes relating to the opportunities, barriers, maturity, idiosyncrasies and risks of people analytics.

It appeared that numerous studies address the promises of and the barriers to people analytics adoption, whereas the idiosyncrasies, the negative implications and associated risks received little attention. Perhaps more startlingly, the researchers discovered that the assumptions behind people analytics are overwhelmingly positive: they seem to be fueled by assumptions of objectivity and infallibility – as opposed, presumably, to human decision-making – and of the ability to predict future human-behavior based on historical data.

THE EMERGENCE OF AUTONOMOUS ANALYTICS

For Giermindl, Strich, Christ, Leicht-Deobald, and Redzepi, the main issue lies there: even if analytics has enabled significant progress in terms of business optimization, human resources are not material resources, and it could pose ethical and moral risks to consider them as such.

To better evaluate the nature of people analytics and the risks involved, the researchers made a new theoretical contribution to the field: to the existing three maturity levels of people analytics (descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive analytics), they proposed a fourth maturity level: autonomous analytics. This novel maturity level helps account for the recent technological developments and the emergence of learning algorithms and AI in the analytics field. Overall, these maturity levels represent a spectrum along which humants increasingly delegate their autonomy in decision-making to a system, which poses specific challenges.

THE PERILS OF PEOPLE ANALYTICS

How can we understand the potential perils of people analytics for organizations and employees, depending on the level of technological maturity? To answer this question, the researchers first determined a list of risks specific to people analytics. Indeed, such technology can:

- Bring about an illusion of control and reductionism
- Lead to estimated predictions and self-fulfilling prophecies
- Foster path dependencies
- Impair transparency and accountability
- Reduce employees' autonomy
- Marginalise human reasoning
- And erode managerial competence.

It is all the more interesting to note that the negative implications of these risks can worsen with technological progress (AI systems, learning algorithms). However, given the current predominant research focusing on the upcoming AI hazards, it is tempting to downplay the risks of today's widely deployed technologies. Indeed, the researchers argue that we shouldn't downplay these risks at lower maturity levels because they still exist, generating problematic consequences on human resources.

PREPARING FOR MORE RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE ANALYTICS

Three practical implications emerge from the research for organisations and managers dealing with the implementation and use of people analytics:

- It contributes to more realistic expectations on people analytics' technologies at work by challenging its underlying assumptions.
- It raises awareness about the risks of transferring other areas' analytics logic to the management of employees.
- And it helps managers to better understand and evaluate the perils arising from people analytics according to their maturity level.

In a nutshell, Giermindl, Strich, Christ, Leicht-Deobald, and Redzepi argue that by looking beyond the positive assumptions and carefully considering the risks posed by people analytics, employees and organizations can appropriately and responsibly adjust their level of reliance on these technological tools. By doing so, organizations can continue to grow while paying careful attention to the autonomy and value of their human resources.

Looking at the degree of integration of the people analytics in your own organization, you can now ask yourself which are the most prevalent risks – and how you can effectively manage them. ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Applying regular business analytics to human resources poses ethical and moral risks.
- The existing literature on people analytics seems mainly based on positive assumptions and lacks extensive study on their risks.
- A novel maturity level (autonomous analytics) put forward by the researchers can account for the new technological advances in the field of analytics.
- Perils of people analytics (reductionism, self-fulfilling prophecies, path dependencies, transparency and accountability, employee's autonomy, human reasoning and managerial competence) can grow with the maturity level of a people analytics system.
- This study offers 3 practical implications: it contributes to more realistic expectations on people analytics' technologies at work, it raises awareness about the risks of transferring other areas' analytics logic to the management of employees, and it helps managers to better understand the perils arising from people analytics.

3 ETHICAL CLIMATES: HOW JAPANESE COMPANIES APPROACH RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT IN CHINA

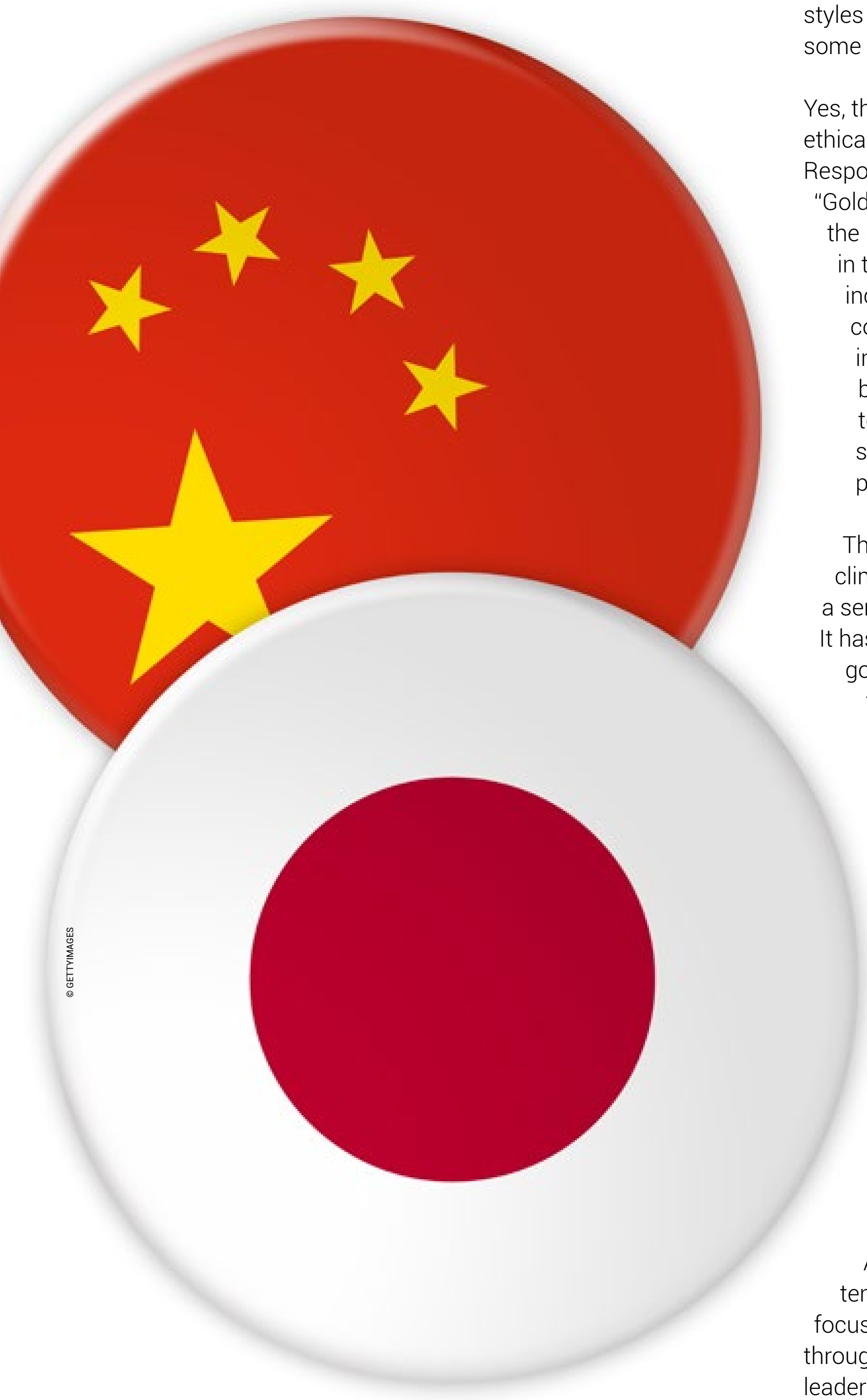
> **Ethical climates significantly impact job performance and organizational commitment.**

Japanese firms contribute significantly to China's economy, with many subsidiaries employing thousands of Chinese employees. What managerial approach do these firms use to ensure both employee motivation and wellbeing, and harmonious Sino-Japanese relations? Prof. **Keikoh Ryu, Keio Business School,** shares his research and reveals the 3 ethical climates necessary to address this. From an interview by Prof. **Adrian Zicari, ESSEC Business School, Council on Business & Society.**

Why is it important to study Japanese firms operating in China?

Studying Japanese firms operating in China is essential for several reasons. Firstly, Japan and China have significant economic ties, with Japan being a major investor in China. Understanding Japanese firms in China is crucial for comprehending this bilateral economic relationship and its impact on the global economy. Secondly, Japanese firms in China represent a blend of Japanese management styles and Chinese work culture. Examining how these firms operate can provide insights into effective cross-cultural management strategies and the challenges of integrating different business cultures.

At the same time, Japanese firms contribute significantly to China's economy and have a notable influence on global markets. Indeed, studying these firms can offer valuable insights into market trends, consumer behavior, and economic policies in China and beyond. And lastly, studying



Japanese firms in China can inform policy-making and strategic decisions both within these companies and at the governmental level. This includes decisions related to trade, foreign investment, and international relations.

In your work, you distinguish between three ethical climates: The Golden Mean style, social responsibility style and friendship-efficiency style. Would you elaborate on those styles and perhaps provide an example of each one? Is there some overlap between those styles?

Yes, the research identifies three types of organizational ethical climates in JFMEs: Golden Mean style, Social Responsibility style, and Friendship-Efficiency style. The "Golden Mean" style of ethical climate is derived from the idea of the golden mean, a concept of moderation in traditional Chinese philosophy, which has been incorporated into Japanese management practices. It combines a focus on balancing friendship and self-interest, team interest and profit. The resulting tension between self-interest and profit on the one hand, and team interest and friendship on the other has been shown to result in an effective leadership style and a positive ethical climate.

The "social responsibility" style of organizational ethical climate also prioritizes self-interest but is infused with a sense of altruism toward others and society at large. It has become increasingly prominent as the Chinese government's focus has shifted from economic growth to social welfare. While over the course of reform and opening-up, efforts have been made to extricate the management and operations of enterprises from government oversight by focusing on macro-economic regulations, the Chinese government continues to intervene in the economic activities of Chinese enterprises, and it has an outsized impact on organizational ethical climate. At the same time, the tendency of JFMEs to prioritize corporate social responsibility is also a product of the historically fraught relationship between China and Japan, as they aim to overcome the reluctance that some locals may have to Japanese products. Only with a positive image, which comes from assuming greater social responsibility, can JFMEs thrive in the Chinese market.

As for the "friendship-efficiency" style, JFMEs in China tend to act like multinational corporations in terms of their focus on international operations and increased efficiency through localization. At the same time, however, Japanese leaders place great importance on the individual needs of their employees, and positively impacting the organizational ethical climate. In fact, prior research shows that leaders play a pivotal role in influencing the formation and development of an ethical climate, and organizations' ethical standards are necessarily shaped by the psychological and behavioral makeup of their executives. This includes but is not necessarily limited to leaders' distinctive approach to problems, the values reflected in their managerial practices, the ethical distinctions they make, as well as the way in which they manage employee expectations. Therefore, to the extent that the management practices of JFMEs tend to emphasize both efficiency and friendship, the "friendship-efficiency" style of the organizational ethical climate remains widespread.

In your work, you also explore the links between each ethical climate and job performance. Could you present your conclusions?

The study suggests that these ethical climates significantly impact job performance and organizational commitment. For example, the Golden Mean style positively influences normative commitment, while the Social Responsibility style enhances corporate image and perceptions of fairness among employees. The Golden Mean style significantly influences normative commitment in JFMEs, with an influence coefficient of 0.75, indicating a strong positive impact; the style is characterized by a balance between employee satisfaction, team spirit, and fairness in wages. It fosters a sense of fairness and belonging among employees, contributing to a normative organizational commitment. The Golden Mean style blends a focus on team spirit and a caring organizational ethical climate with operational self-interest. This blend typically leads to a stronger commitment to organizational norms and values among employees.

As for Social responsibility style, the evidence in the SEM (structural equation modeling) regression data clearly shows that the observed variables associated with the social responsibility style of organizational ethical climate exert a significant positive impact on normative commitment, as well as on the measurement of the observed variables of social responsibility and organizational commitment. It is clear that the social responsibility style of organizational ethical climate can help JFMEs enhance their corporate image while encouraging normative commitment among employees by instilling in them a sense of fairness.

Moreover, the results suggest that the friendship-efficiency style of organizational ethical climate has a significantly positive impact on normative commitment with an influence coefficient value of 0.31. In addition, the following SEM regression tables reflect the significance of other observed variables, as well as the impact of the endogenous variables on the exogenous latent variables. The management philosophies of JFMEs are necessarily influenced by Japanese culture and are based on the belief that self-interest and efficiency should ultimately be grounded in altruism. As a result, the tendency of Japanese enterprises to place a special emphasis on employee and consumer satisfaction leads to the development of a friendship-efficiency style of organizational climate, under which loyalty is fostered through training, investment and the cultivation of an overall sense of belonging.

Your study took place before Covid-19. Would you imagine that the pandemic changed in anyway?

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly brought significant changes to many aspects of organizational functioning, including the impact of organizational ethical climates on job performance. The Golden Mean style emphasized balance, including employee satisfaction, team spirit, and fairness in wages, leading to a normative commitment to organizational values. The pandemic's challenges, like remote work and health concerns, might have amplified the need for balance. Organizations may have had to adapt by placing greater emphasis on mental health, work-life balance, and effective remote work policies. This could lead to a deeper understanding and implementation of the Golden Mean style, potentially enhancing its positive impact on job performance.

The Social Responsibility Style typically focuses on the well-being of employees and the larger community, emphasizing ethical considerations in business decisions. Here, the pandemic heightened awareness of social responsibility, particularly regarding employee health and safety and community support. Companies that actively engage in protecting their employees and contributing to societal needs may have seen increased employee loyalty and motivation, potentially leading to better job performance.

The Friendship-Efficiency Style focuses on fostering strong interpersonal relationships and efficient work practices. As such, the shift to remote work might have challenged the maintenance of close interpersonal relationships, necessitating new strategies for team building and communication. However, the efficiency aspect might have been bolstered as companies streamlined operations and adopted new technologies to cope with the pandemic's challenges.

According to the results of your study, would you have suggestions or advice to investors in China (coming either from Japan or from elsewhere)?

Firstly, it is important for investors to understand the cultural dynamics in China. Understanding and respecting Chinese cultural and ethical norms is crucial. Investors should be aware that local employees might have different expectations regarding organizational ethics, which can significantly impact their commitment and performance. As mentioned, the study highlights ethical climates like the Golden Mean style, which emphasizes a balance of employee satisfaction, team spirit, and fairness in wages. Investors should consider these aspects when shaping the organizational culture of their ventures in China.

And secondly, it is also necessary to ensure a balanced approach to management, focusing on employee satisfaction, fairness, and team spirit (The Golden Mean). This balance is crucial for enhancing employee commitment and job performance. Given the increasing global focus on social responsibility, investors should prioritize ethical business practices that consider the well-being of employees and the community.

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This could lead to better brand perception and employee morale. Moreover, develop strategies to foster strong interpersonal relationships while maintaining efficiency. This may include team-building activities, effective communication channels, and encouraging a collaborative work environment.

By focusing on these areas, investors can create a conducive work environment that aligns with local cultural norms and ethical expectations, thereby enhancing organizational commitment and job performance in their Chinese ventures. ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Japanese firms contribute largely to the Chinese economy and Japanese firms in China represent a blend of Japanese management styles and Chinese work culture.
- The "Golden Mean" style of ethical climate is derived from a concept of moderation in traditional Chinese philosophy, which has been incorporated into Japanese management practices. It combines a focus on balancing friendship and self-interest, team interest and profit.
- The "social responsibility" style of organizational ethical climate can help Japanese firms enhance their corporate image while encouraging normative commitment among employees by instilling in them a sense of fairness.
- The "friendship-efficiency" style: Japanese firms in China tend to act like multinational corporations in terms of their focus on international operations and increased efficiency through localization. But Japanese leaders place great importance on the individual needs of their employees, and positively impacting the organizational ethical climate.
- For investors: Understanding and respecting Chinese cultural and ethical norms is crucial. It is also necessary to ensure a balanced approach to management, focusing on employee satisfaction, fairness, and team spirit.

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BOREDOM AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: LESSONS FROM TINDER AND BUMBLE

> **Managers might assume that an employee sitting at their desk must be engaged, but the quiet quitting phenomenon tells us otherwise.**

Anh Luong, Assistant Professor of Business Analytics at **Warwick Business School,** explores how user boredom while interacting with dating apps can potentially be used to spark workplace creativity and engagement.

By Prof. Anh Luong. Originally posted by Warwick CORE Insights under the title Lessons from Tinder and Bumble on using boredom to drive employee engagement. With kind acknowledgements.

Related research: Gregory Narr & Anh Luong (2023) Bored ghosts in the dating app assemblage: How dating app algorithms couple ghosting behaviors with a mood of boredom, The Communication Review, 26:1, 1-23, DOI: 10.1080/10714421.2022.2129949

Vogue dating columnist Annie Lord recently bemoaned the general discontent with the apps that have come to dominate the modern world of courting.

She cites data from the Pew Research Center showing that nearly half of dating app users end up feeling more of a sense of frustration than optimism about the prospects of finding 'the one'. Underpinning this discontent is a strong sense that people don't behave particularly well when they are participating in dating apps.

Strategies such as ghosting (when dates vanish without an explanation), benching (when people are put on hold until somebody better comes along), and breadcrumbing (giving just enough attention to maintain interest but never committing) are now common forms of behaviour online.

In our research of popular dating apps – namely Tinder and Bumble – we found ghosting is something that often occurs because people are simply... bored. In fact, many are bored to begin with, so install the apps to try to alleviate that boredom.

BOREDOM: GHOSTLY AND GHASTLY ENGAGEMENT

They're then made more bored by the many unfulfilling encounters they have via the apps, which prompts them to ghost people, despite considering the act rude and inappropriate when it happens to them. And the apps themselves often don't help, with few providing any means to make the conversations between people more interesting.

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This seemingly undesirable situation is further compounded by the sense among the app dating companies themselves that the users' experience is in fact altogether positive. When they assess the usage of the apps by simplistic and aggregate measures, such as number of users, time spent on the site, and the number of messages users exchange, then the apps could seem to be a roaring success.

Indeed, the lack of seemingly viable alternatives prompts many of those that delete the apps in frustration to reinstall them and give them another go. This cycle of dismay gives the impression that boredom and dissatisfaction are actually key factors that drive engagement.

It is a discovery whose implications run far beyond the confines of the online dating industry, not least of which because the rest of the economy is in the midst of the so-called 'quiet quitting' phenomenon that is driven by similar levels of boredom and lack of fulfilment at work.

For instance, an anonymous survey conducted at Blind, an online community for tech professionals, revealed around two-thirds of respondents were bored at work. It's a world in which Gallup data states just 32 per cent of employees are engaged at work, with nearly 20 per cent saying they're actively disengaged, and staff feel that way in large part because their workplace needs aren't being met.

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MEASURE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Our research into boredom in the online dating world has a couple of key implications for business. The first is that it's important to measure the right things when it comes to gauging the level of engagement among a workforce. As with dating apps, it can be tempting to focus on the things that are relatively easy to measure and assume that this accurately captures engagement.

For instance, employee attendance ticks that box, and managers might assume that an employee sitting at their desk must be engaged, but of course, the quiet quitting phenomenon tells us otherwise.

To effectively measure employee engagement, managers need to understand what's important to their staff. This is very unlikely to be a one-size-fits-all thing, with some wanting teamwork, others career development, and others effective communication.

Managers can then perform what's known as a 'drivers analysis', which attempts to hone in on the things that really have an impact on engagement through surveys of employees, using likert scales for each factor. A percentage share for each factor can then be produced, giving managers a good indication of what drives employee engagement among their staff and address any shortcomings.

BOREDOM AND CREATIVITY

The second key takeaway from our research is that it is easy to fall into the trap of assuming that boredom is always a bad thing. After all, we're driven by the desire for our workforce to be as engaged as possible, so boredom must mean those efforts are failing. Research shows, however, that a degree of boredom can actually make us more creative.

The researchers found that participants who were given a boring task to perform before then trying to create some interesting artwork ended up producing more creative projects than those who were not induced by boredom beforehand. This was especially so among participants who had certain personality traits, including cognitive drive, openness to new experiences, intellectual curiosity, and a desire to learn new things.

By inducing boredom in such people, it triggers something known as 'divergence-seeking behaviours', which is when the curious among us explore in an effort to break out of the intellectual straightjacket we've been placed in to begin with. It remains to be seen whether (and how) organisations should deliberately try and engineer boredom in the workplace, but it is a reminder that small amounts of boredom might actually be beneficial.

HOW TO MAKE BOREDOM WORK POSITIVELY… AT WORK

At the moment, however, this boredom is not being channelled in the right way, with some of our interviewees revealing they mostly use dating apps while they're bored at work. Managers could try to provide more productive outlets for the divergence-seeking behaviours that are produced by boredom, perhaps via enterprise social media and channels that encourage employees to come forward with ideas.

There was a strong sense among the dating app users we studied that they stuck it out because they didn't believe that any of the other apps were any better. However, their continued usage of the apps seems to result in increasingly cynical and lacklustre engagement, which further exacerbates the boredom spreading through the dating app network.

For managers, it is important that they avoid falling into the same trap and ensure that false engagement isn't sought just for the sake of gaming the metrics without having substantial progress being made in terms of things that truly matter to employees and the organisation.

Failure to do so seems likely to hurt organisations and result in similar disenchantment among employees as we see among the dating users we interviewed. ///

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Research into popular dating apps identified ghosting and other rude and inappropriate behaviour as something that often occurs because people are bored the many unfulfilling encounters they have via the apps.
- Users tend to dis-install the apps then install them again. This cycle of dismay gives the impression that boredom and dissatisfaction are actually key factors that drive engagement.
- This can be used in wider, working environment contexts, especially in the light of the so-called 'quiet quitting' phenomenon that is driven by similar levels of boredom and lack of fulfilment at work.
- To effectively measure employee engagement and motivation, managers need to understand what's important to their staff.
- Managers can then perform a 'drivers analysis' which targets the things that really have an impact on engagement through surveys of employees. A percentage share for each factor can then be produced, giving managers a good indication of what drives employee engagement among their staff and address any shortcomings.
- Research also shows that a degree of boredom can actually make us more creative.
- Boredom triggers something known as 'divergence-seeking behaviours': when the curious among us explore in an effort to break out of the intellectual straightjacket we've been placed in to begin with.
- Managers can provide more productive outlets for the divergence-seeking behaviours that are produced by boredom: enterprise social media and channels that encourage employees to come forward with ideas.

IS YOUR COMPANY SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ENOUGH?

> **The authenticity of a company's support for a cause diminishes in the eyes of Canadians when the CEO stays silent on that issue.**

A new consumer survey puts high demands on businesses to do more for society. **Jacob Brower,** Associate Professor of Marketing, **Smith School of Business,** contends that CEOs should loudly lead the way.

Is Your Company Socially Responsible Enough? By Jordan Whitehouse. Originally published on **Smith Business Insight.** With kind acknowledgements.

Last September, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard made headlines when he announced that he would donate his company to fight climate change. "Earth is now our only shareholder," he wrote in a widely circulated letter. "Instead of 'going public,' you could say we're 'going purpose.'"

Few companies have put their profits where their purpose is quite like Patagonia. Chouinard and his family are putting their entire company into a specially designed trust and non-profit so that all its earnings—some US$100 million annually—go to save the planet.

But the outdoor clothing retailer isn't alone in standing up for a cause. Take Nike's famous ads with quarterback Colin Kaepernick. Or Delta Air Lines' defence of voter rights in Georgia. Or the thousands of other corporate pronouncements over the past several years on issues as wide-ranging as race, gender and the environment.

Yet as headline-grabbing and seemingly mainstream as these public displays have become, some critics question whether companies are doing enough. When a company like Apple has a market valuation of US$2.3 trillion—which would make it the seventh wealthiest country on the planet—what level of responsibility does it have to address society's ills? Moreover, which ills should companies tackle, and how should they do it?

These questions were at the heart of a survey of 1,120 Canadians commissioned by Smith School of Business that gauged what Canadians expect businesses should contribute to social and environmental issues. The big takeaway: many think companies need to prioritize a lot more than their bottom lines.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE: SURVEY SAYS...

The survey, conducted by Proof Strategies, put a battery of questions to Canadians 18 to 84 from across the country. To the question of whether businesses should do more than they do now to solve society's problems and help meet the needs of people, 52 per cent of respondents agreed. (Another 32 per cent somewhat agreed.) On average, respondents said that businesses should dedicate 21 per cent of their profits to important social issues.

As for which issues are most urgent, respondents weren't in agreement. Fair wages topped the list, with 45 per cent saying it must be one of the top three priorities for companies, but 19 other issues were also cited, including food affordability (23 per cent), gender equality (19 per cent), economic development (16 per cent) and net zero carbon emissions (13 per cent).

Some respondents did agree, however, that businesses should be punished for letting them down. About one in five (18 per cent) said they decreased their spending entirely with a brand because of its bad behaviour towards others, or the brand's position, or lack of a position, on an important issue.

Others went further than that, particularly young people. Canadians 18 to 24 were four times as likely as those 65 and over to ask that an authority (such as a government agency) police or regulate the company. They're also nearly three times as likely to protest a company that disappoints them.

So how should businesses respond to the issues that Canadians care about? Close to one-third of respondents strongly expect CEOs to take a firm position on social issues. About the same number said it's more important that a business's support for a cause be "authentic" than how much money or other support it provides to that cause. Also noteworthy: The authenticity of a company's support for a cause diminishes in the eyes of Canadians when the CEO stays silent on that issue.

A QUICK HISTORY LESSON IN CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

At first glance, one of the more eyebrow-raising survey findings is that Canadians view businesses and charities as equally responsible for helping others.

But maybe this shouldn't be so surprising, says Jacob Brower, Distinguished Faculty Fellow of Marketing at Smith School of Business. "Corporations are the most powerful entities on earth, and therefore people are expecting more from businesses because they see businesses as having the agility and speed to actually do something, and potentially that they hold some responsibility for some of the social ills that they see."

Brower has been looking at corporate social responsibility (CSR) since his PhD days and says there have been three historical phases to corporate do-good efforts. For most of the 20th century, CSR comprised donations to charities, hospitals and other causes that executives deemed worthy. By the early 1990s, however, CSR started to institutionalize across firms as a way to mitigate harm. Ben & Jerry's stance against artificial growth hormones is one example. This was CSR 2.0.

Now, as social movements around gender, race and environmentalism go mainstream, CSR has shifted into a new phase, says Brower. "CSR 3.0 goes beyond a company having its house in order to focus on the broader societal impact the company has on the issues that people care about."

THE MORE THINGS STAY THE SAME

We may see signs of the shift from CSR 2.0 to 3.0 in some of the Smith survey results, says Brower. For example, one question asked respondents to identify which of the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals businesses should care about. Seventy per cent answered climate action, while only 53 per cent chose "responsible production and consumption."

"It could be that people see responsible consumption and production almost as table stakes," says Brower. In other words, firms should have already dealt with these CSR 2.0-type issues. "Climate action is still about doing less harm, but the expectation is increasingly about looking forward at the broader socio-environmental impact of business as a whole."

So what should businesses do with results like these? Perhaps take them as a signal for how to proceed, says Brower. "One of the things I've been arguing in my recent

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work is that CSR 2.0 is a necessary condition for CSR 3.0. If your house is not in order and you attempt to engage in brand activism, you are probably going to get in trouble."

Another lesson: Canadians think businesses should care about a lot of different social issues. But this shouldn't be surprising either, says Brower. "It's what we see in marketing generally—the market is fractured. And what that creates is an opportunity to niche specialize for different groups of people."

In short, the survey is a reminder to think about the fundamentals of marketing, says Brower. "No corporation is going to be able to deal with all of these issues, nor should they most likely. It's still really important to go back to the basics of understanding who your customers are, what issues matter to your constituency, and in what way they are likely to respond.". ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A survey of 1,120 Canadians gauged what Canadians expect businesses should contribute to social and environmental issues. Many think companies need to prioritize a lot more than their bottom lines.
- 52 per cent of respondents agreed that businesses should do more than they do now to solve society's problems and help meet the needs of people (another 32 per cent somewhat agreed.)
- On average, respondents said that businesses should dedicate 21 per cent of their profits to important social issues.
- Fair wages topped the list of the top three priorities for companies. Other issues included food affordability, gender equality, economic development, and net zero carbon emissions.
- 18% of respondents said they decreased their spending entirely with a brand because of its bad behaviour towards others, or the brand's position, or lack of a position, on an important issue.
- One-third of respondents strongly expect CEOs to take a firm position on social issues. About the same number said it's more important that a business's support for a cause be "authentic" than how much money or other support it provides to that cause. The authenticity of a company's support for a cause diminishes in the eyes of Canadians when the CEO stays silent on that issue.
- 70% said that companies should care about the UN SDG climate action.

CONFIDENCE: HOW IT HELPS TO KEEP THE MARKETING BUDGET HEALTHY AND LONG-TERM

> **While usually confident CEOs are quite unresponsive towards advice, they are more inclined to listen to highly confident CMOs.**

What motivates CEOs when they decide on a marketing project? Are they just borrowing from the future to finance the present? And how can a CMO prevent cuts in their marketing budget that will ultimately influence a firm's long term performance? Prof. **Tuck S. Chung, ESSEC Business School Asia-Pacific,** explores the psychological traits of senior management that facilitate – or prevent – short-sighted marketing management.

Related research: Executive confidence and myopic marketing management, Tuck Siong Chung, Angie Low, Roland T. Rust, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Sciences.

When you were a child, what superpower did you want to have? Flying? Telekineses? Invisibility? And what about now in later life? In fact, one of the most desired superpowers among adults is mind-reading. And it makes sense – not least in a business context. A marketing director, for example, would probably use this superpower to find out their CEO's future plans for the marketing budget. Do they have to be prepared to defend it? Is the CEO planning a cut in the marketing budget that might harm the company's long-term performance?

Unfortunately, for many working in firms and organisations, it is unlikely that they will ever gain the ability to read minds. But the good news is that research carried out by Prof. Tuck S. Chung of ESSEC Business School Asia-Pacific points to the conclusion that it is not really necessary either.

Using confidence as a marker in CEOs to be more inclined to support erroneous marketing cuts, Prof. Chung and his fellow researchers sought to find out how Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) can identify such situations and how they can protect their budget with a – this time – real-life superpower: Their own confidence.

A COSTLY GAMBLE ON THE FUTURE

Marketing spending is naturally a high-wire act – if it is too high, it increases costs and decreases current profits. If it is too low, costs are low and profits are higher in the short term. In the long-term however, low marketing spending harms long-term prospects and thus long-term profitability.

Looking at organisational structures, it is mostly the CEO who has the decision-making ability to determine the marketing budget. However, external pressures from the stock market, financial analysts or short-term oriented investors make them highly susceptible to "borrow from the future". When faced with a potential earnings shortfall under their term of management, CEOs are likely to cut investments in discretionary expenses – i.e. the marketing budget – to show a rosier picture in the P&L statement and to appease stakeholders.

In the long-term, for the company as a whole, cutting the marketing budget in such a way will however cut earnings as the product is no longer effectively marketed to the consumer. So, how can short-term oriented marketing management be prevented?

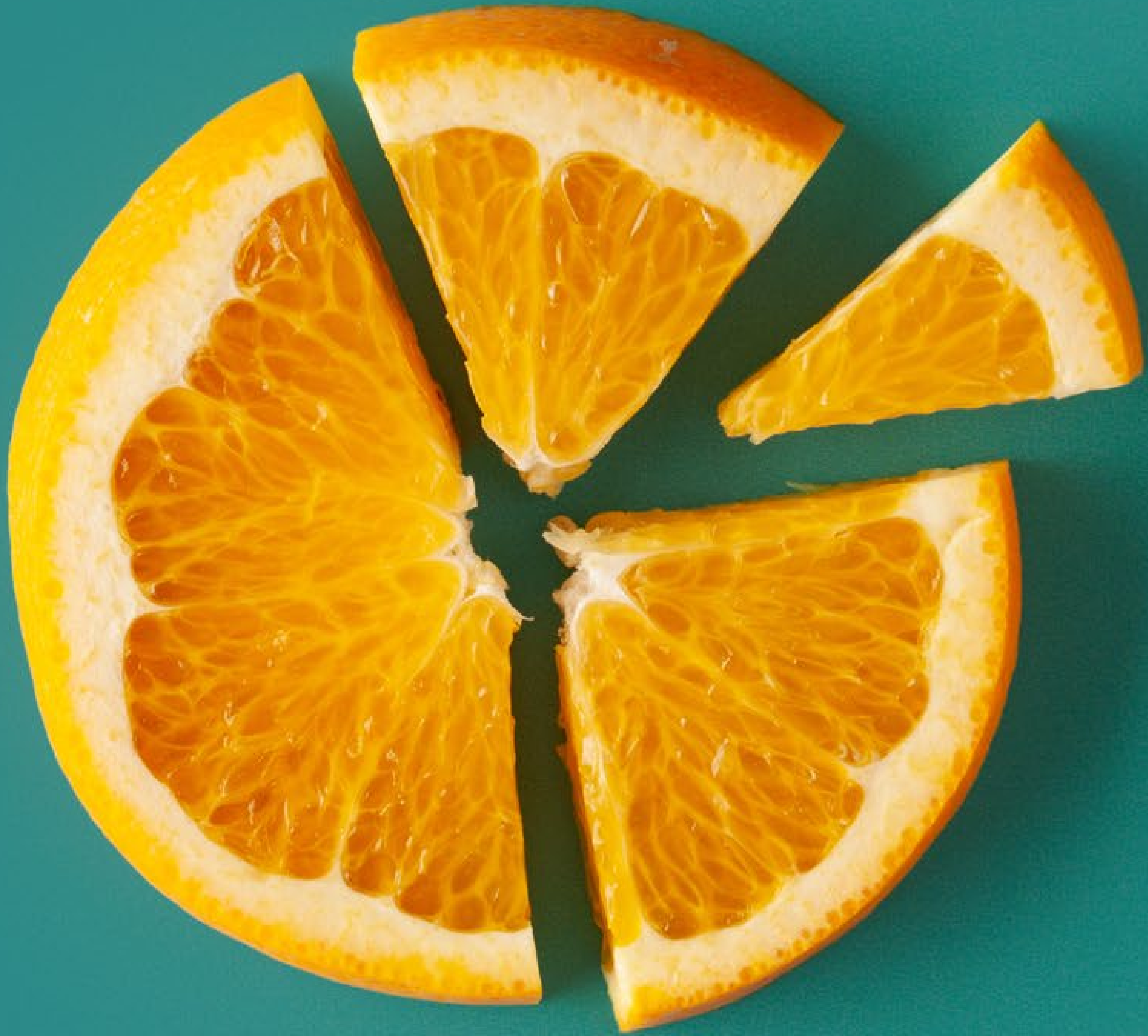
UNDERSTANDING THE BIG BOSSES: CONFIDENCE IS KEY

A first step is to understand the motivations and characteristics of CEOs, the board of directors they interact with, and their CMOs whose work is directly affected by the marketing budget.

So what would make a CEO disregard possible long-term consequences of cutting the marketing budget? Prof. Chung and his colleague's research used confidence as the key characteristic that influences such decision making. Moreover, confidence is often seen as a valuable trait in CEOs.

Paradoxically however, having a confident CEO comes with some shortfalls: the latter tend to believe that the stock market has undervalued their firm. And in order to prove the market wrong, they have a tendency to accumulate internal cash flows. Moreover, they also tend to overestimate the payoff in risky projects, which in turn causes them to adopt riskier strategies. And finally, they are tempted to give more optimistic earnings forecasts, their earnings management is more accrual-based, and they are less responsive to feedback and expert advice.

Using data sets, Prof. Chung et al looked at previously identified traits of confident CEOs and how their confidence could affect market management decisions. They also explored how CMOs could use their position – albeit only with persuasive power – to mitigate such decision making, as well as taking into account the role of the independent board of directors and how it might affect the myopic marketing tendencies of confident CEOs.



PRESSURE FROM THE TOP

The researchers indeed found that highly confident CEOs are more prone to cutting the marketing budget for short-term profitability. However, it is the board of directors which really exacerbates these tendencies: CEOs have to report their performance – good and bad – to them. And coincidentally, it is the board of directors which also decides on CEO compensation.

Moreover, while the board of directors is independent, they have to answer to shareholders. Shareholders in turn are interested in maximising their earnings, i.e. the dividend pay-out. As dividends are dependent on profit, shareholders tend to be more interested in short-term, rather than long-term, performance. As mentioned earlier, in turn this means that the board of directors, representing the interests of the shareholders, put a lot of pressure on the CEOs, leading them to be more inclined to engage in myopic marketing management.

COUNTERING CONFIDENCE WITH CONFIDENCE

Under these conditions, who can defend the marketing budget? The most likely answer is the CMO. And while they do not have the power, in the traditional sense, to veto the CEOs decision concerning the marketing budget, they do have a persuasive role. Even more so, a highly confident CMO can act as a checks and balances entity.

While usually confident CEOs are quite unresponsive towards advice, they are more inclined to listen to highly confident CMOs who demonstrate a conviction in their own abilities and knowledge of the market. This confidence therefore gives CMOs the ability to influence the firm's marketing decisions.

WINNING THE BATTLE OVER THE MARKETING BUDGET

So what can CMOs do to win this battle of confidence? First of all, it is important to recognise the signs for a short-sighted marketing budget cut. These turn out to be a highly confident CEO paired together with a potential earnings shortfall. Catching these indicators on time allows the CMO to take action. Moreover, CMOs should use their own confidence to advise their CEOs, as well as use it to persuade the board of directors to not go forward with the marketing budget cuts.

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As it is the CEO's job to guarantee the long-term performance of the firm, they too would be wise to take action to prevent themselves making any short-sighted decision making. Starting on a more personal level, CEOs could take the time and check their own confidence-levels. Additionally, while potentially counter-intuitive, CEOs can opt to strengthen the CMO's position and seek their advice. For even greater impact, the researchers recommend that CEOs actively recruit CMOs with high confidence levels in order to help them prevent making short-sighted decisions.

Lastly, Prof. Chung and his fellow researchers encourage boards of directors to include marketing metrics in the firm's reports and evaluate the marketing performance to ensure the firm's long-term profitability. In general, it would be important to educate board members in the importance of marketing. Moreover, to gain a deeper understanding of the firm and their added value, board members should be encouraged to have regular exchanges with the chief officers of other departments.

Prof. Tuck S. Chung's research shows us that finally we do not need superpowers in the workplace. However, both CEOs and CMOs need to be confident and have a long-term vision for the future. After all, confidence can prevent mistakes with negative long-term consequences. ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- In the long-term, low marketing spending harms long-term prospects and thus long-term profitability.
- It is mostly the CEO who has the decision-making ability to determine the marketing budget. But external pressures from the stock market, financial analysts or short-term oriented investors make them take short-term decisions and lower budgets.
- A first step is to understand the motivations and characteristics of CEOs, the board of directors they interact with, and their CMOs whose work is directly affected by the marketing budget.
- CMOs do not have the power to veto the CEOs decision concerning the marketing budget, but they have a persuasive role. While usually confident CEOs are quite unresponsive towards advice, they are more inclined to listen to highly confident CMOs who demonstrate a conviction in their own abilities and knowledge of the market. This confidence therefore gives CMOs the ability to influence the firm's marketing decisions.
- For CMOs, it is important to recognise the signs for a short-sighted marketing budget cut: a highly confident CEO paired together with a potential earnings shortfall. Catching these indicators on time allows the CMO to take action.
- CMOs should use their own confidence to advise their CEOs, as well as use it to persuade the board of directors to not go forward with the marketing budget cuts.
- Boards of directors should include marketing metrics in the firm's reports and evaluate the marketing performance to ensure the firm's long-term profitability. In general, it would be important to educate board members in the importance of marketing.

INTEGRITY: A LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTE THAT CAN SPARK EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY

> **Organizations should consider the benefits of leader integrity at different levels.**

A spotlight on Professor **He Peng, School of Management Fudan University,** and his research into leadership integrity included in the recently published Routledge CoBS book **The Employee and the Post-Pandemic Workplace: Towards a new, enlightened working environment.**

Related research: Peng, H., Wei, F. *Trickle-Down Effects of Perceived Leader Integrity on Employee Creativity*: A Moderated Mediation Model. J Bus Ethics 150, 837–851 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-016-3226-3

Professor He Peng is a widely published academic based at the prestigious School of Management Fudan University in Shanghai, and whose research fields focus on organizational behavior and human resource management, leadership, and indigenous management.

The beauty of Prof. Peng's research lies in exploring the psychology of leadership and workplace relations from an original, some would say atypical, viewpoint – be it jealousy and conflict, employee voice, knowledge hiding, how humility and modesty impact job and corporate performance, and the impact of integrity on behaviours. Indeed, we are lucky at the CoBS to have been able to highlight several of these fascinating research findings via **CoBS Insights.**

Further, Prof. He Peng's research on leader integrity features in the latest Routledge-CoBS book The Employee and the Post-Pandemic Workplace: Towards a new, enlightened working environment. In this interview, Prof. Peng gives the CoBS a special insight into the takeaways to be gleaned from his work included in the publication.

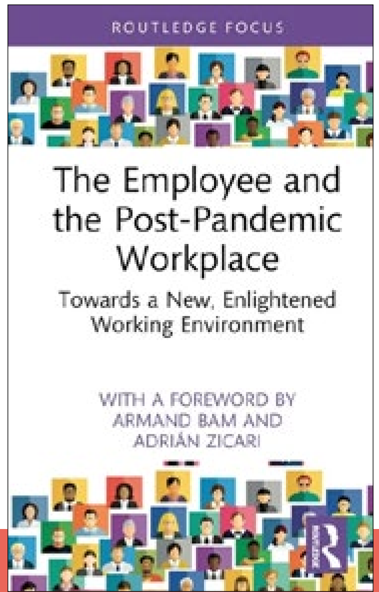
THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

"Leader behavioural integrity," asserts Prof. Peng, "can significantly increase employee creativity." Indeed, it can flow down through an organizational hierarchy from high-level managers to lower-level managers, to finally manifest itself in employee creativity. And for him, it is the responsible culture of the organisation or firm that creates the necessary ethical standards to shape and strengthen the positive effects of leader behavioral integrity on employee creativity.

Why should all this be important in the context of the post-pandemic workplace? Prof. He Peng emphasizes the role of creativity and its essential influence in building advantages for the organisation – especially in a post-pandemic era marked by stagnant growth, tensions caused by shortages, and the tendency to retract from the type of globalized business model so typical of the pre-pandemic period.

Indeed, until not so long ago, creativity was relegated to the lower end of companies' skills lists. With the challenges of the post-pandemic era, coupled with rapid technological advances, it has now become one of the most solicited employee skills. After all, thinking out of the box can be a game changer in terms of product innovation, new market penetration, and subsequent business growth.

"Our research," says Prof. Peng, referring to the co-authored paper *Trickle-Down Effects of Perceived Leader Integrity on Employee Creativity* published in the Journal of Business Ethics, "provides very usual practical implications. Among our findings, we reveal that to encourage employee creativity and innovation, organisations would be wise to underscore leader integrity."



Discover the book chapter Leader Integrity: How it influences the organisation and employee creativity. Based on Professor He Peng's research included in the book:

The Employee and the Post-Pandemic Workplace: Towards a new, enlightened working environment

FOSTERING EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY: TOWARDS THE FUTURE

To make this happen, Prof. Peng states that change needs to occur within firms and organisations, hopefully with the latter considering ways in which to include the notion of leadership integrity in their managerial actions – for example, making it a feature of HR policy to hire or promote employees with a high level of integrity.

"Organizations should consider the benefits of leader integrity at different levels," adds Prof. Peng. "With organizations especially putting more effort into fostering the integrity of higher-level leaders because, as our research has demonstrated, the confidence leaders instill as a result of their ethical behaviors plays a highly important role in in encouraging employee creativity." ///

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BUSINESS ETHICS RESEARCH: LONG OVERDUE FOR A REVAMP

> **Research writing must be context-sensitive in that it understands, respects, and avoids perpetuating paradigms that take the Western ways of investigation and understanding as superior.**

Professors **Anita Bosch, Stellenbosch Business School, Obaa Akua Konadu-Osei, Maastricht University,** and **Smaranda Boros, Vlerick Business School,** dissect how the historical dominance of Western research methodologies have limited the strength of research output in non-Western regions and propose the adoption of an alternative, cultural-specific approach for research in business ethics.

Related research: *Methodological Decolonisation and Local Epistemologies in Business Ethics Research, Obaa Akua Konadu-Ose, Smaranda Boros, Anita Bosch, Journal of Business Ethics.*

WHY DOES RESEARCH INTO METHODOLOGIES MATTER?

Academic research is in large part, a purview of a particular group of highly educated people. But there is a reason why some of the best universities and business schools in the world compete with each other using generous stipends to attract doctoral students: the production of research is a public good, with findings serving to further humanity's knowledge.

And since human beings, as a category, is inclusive of all the tapestry of humanity, it follows that producing the most reliable and advanced research must account for this myriad of differences. Unfortunately, for research in business ethics, this is not the case. In the review of previous research, Prof. Anita Bosch and her colleagues found that Western methodologies reign supreme in global research.

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As such, in non-Western contexts, the disconnect in research methodologies and their respective subjects perpetuates exclusion, assert Anita Bosch et al. By failing to account for differences, research not only falls short of serving the larger public good, it runs counter to serving humanity. Hence this research on how this issue can be amended, by taking a case sample look into sub-Saharan African epistemology – how we figure out what's true and valid – as a means to improve research in the African region.

THE REQUIREMENT FOR A MIDDLE GROUND

Despite the need for more inclusive research methods, it remains the case that the methods so far dominating in the West have done so for good reason: they have been tested time and again to be of high quality.

But Prof. Bosch and colleagues also point out that the goal is not to create a binary approach, wherein one approach is dictated by the region of the world it investigates. But rather, to achieve a balance between the rigour associated with conventional practice and culturally sensitive methodologies that accounts for the differences in people. In so doing, the academic community can produce research that is both reliable and inclusive, which in turn serves the public interest.

WHAT DOES HAVING A MIDDLE GROUND IN RESEARCH LOOK LIKE?

Historically, one of the prevailing frictions in how knowledge is perceived is that between collectivism – grounded in goals shared by a culture or group – and individualism – shaped by the freedom of the individual over the collective group, culture or state. This friction extends to the realm of academic research, creating a binary approach – either one or the other.

But Prof. Bosch et al point out that it shouldn't necessarily be the case, given the existence of interpretivism as Western methodology which regards knowledge as both socially constructed and understood from an individual's perspective. Interpretivism therefore, is not in contradiction with the collectivism associated with non-Western methods.

In this light, to meet at a middle ground, the researchers fused interpretivism with ubuntu, a sub-Saharan concept of humanism that believes in the inherent interconnectedness of humans to one another and their respective environments. They argue that interpretivism-based research can be complemented using the philosophy of ubuntu, thus illustrating that "methodological decolonization" is possible.

More concretely, this meant that the collection, analysis, and value of a particular focus of research will have to be validated through the concept of ubuntu – framing inherent relevance across cultures. And while ubuntu bears similarities with other philosophies, some of which are Western, it is complementary to both Western and non-Western methodologies.

Indeed, on the ground, the repercussions of the fusion can be seen via the consultation of local community elders on the vitality of the research topic and access to people, listening for understanding without dismissing information that seems confusing or doesn't make sense at first, the publication of academic papers in local language, the reality that the community is the primary context of information and also double-checks information accuracy, and joint ownership of knowledge.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS ETHICS RESEARCH

So, what does this fusion between Interpretivism and ubuntu mean for business ethics research and are the implications actually significant? According to Anita Bosch and her fellow researchers, it truly is. Since methodology affects research agenda, the flashlight that determines which questions are worthy of investigation requires greater balance.

As such, research agendas must be navigated in consideration of the access available to them and the power-relations present in the environment of a particular study. And consequently, asserts Prof. Anita Bosch, execution must be context-sensitive in that it understands, respects, and avoids perpetuating paradigms that take the Western ways of investigation and understanding as superior.

The world economy is run in large part by capitalism, a purview of business as a practice, study, and a livelihood. In fact, business is so powerful that we get daily news of companies large and small swaying governments, solving some of the world's most pressing problems, and in the same breath, contributing to humanity's existential threat: climate change.

If amending the way we conduct research on business ethics can tip the scale towards the humanity-serving quality of business, then blending Western and non-Western approaches in how we approach creating knowledge will surely be worthwhile. ///

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A disconnect in research methodologies and their respective subjects and contexts perpetuates exclusion. By failing to account for differences, research not only falls short of serving the larger public good, it runs counter to serving humanity.
- Despite the need for more inclusive research methods, it remains the case that the methods that have dominated thus far in the West have done so for good reason: they have been tested time and again to be of high quality.
- One of the prevailing frictions within epistemology, the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge itself, is that between collectivism and individualism; which results in a binary approach to methods of research.
- Interpretivism is not in contradiction with the collectivism associated with non-Western methods. It can be fused with ubuntu, a sub-Saharan concept of humanism that believes in the inherent interconnectedness of humans to one another and their respective environments.
- Methodology affects research agenda, the flashlight that determines which questions are worthy of investigation. As such, creating methods that are inclusive means answering questions that serve a wider array of people.
- Business is so powerful that we get daily news of companies large and small swaying governments, solving some of the world's most pressing problems, and in the same breath, contributing to humanity's existential threat: climate change.
- We must be extremely critical of how research in business ethics is conducted given its sizable influence on society and local communities.

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IMPACT INVESTING AS PERCEIVED BY THE WEALTHY: A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HYBRID PRACTICES?

> **An entrepreneur wishing to disseminate impact investment needs to gauge her audience carefully and adapt her discourse accordingly.**

Ever heard of hybrid practices? These are human activities which, like "impact investing", combine several different logics – in this case finance and philanthropy. Faced with the apparent complexity of these developing hybrid practices, individuals have contrasting responses. Can the reaction of wealthy individuals to impact investing tell us anything about what drives the adoption of them? Research conducted by Profs. **Arthur Gautier, Anne-Claire Pache, ESSEC Business School,** and **Filipe Santos, Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics,** lifts a new veil on this question.

Related research: *Making Sense of Hybrid Practices: the role of individual adherence to institutional logic in impact investing, Arthur Gautier, Anne-Claire Pache, Filipe Santos, Organization studies.*

They may sound exotic at first, but hybrid practices are becoming increasingly commonplace in our daily lives, combining elements from very different fields that would not conventionally go together. Take '*Nouvelle cuisine*' for example, which added elements of modernity to traditional French cooking in the 1970s, or the famous Airbnb company, which has skillfully blended commercial and community logics. While they may be successful, these hybrid approaches are not universally accepted.

By studying the reactions of high-net-worth individuals (HNWI – or put simply, very wealthy individuals) to the practice of impact investing, Professors Arthur Gautier, Anne-Claire Pache and Filipe Santos show us that behind individual opinion lie key interpretive mechanisms that explain adoption, rejection, or indifference to hybrid practices.

This study is therefore particularly useful for scholars, thanks to its particular contribution to the fields of sensemaking and institutional theory, as well as for entrepreneurs wishing to create and disseminate hybrid practices.

AN INDIVIDUAL'S RESPONSE IS A TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE

Current research in institutional theory often falls short in providing a comprehensive explanation for how individuals develop responses to contrasting demands from their environment: when considering a person facing multiple logics, scholars usually neglect the individual's interpretation, subjectivity, and context. However, Prof. Gautier et al argue that people's life stories and intimate connections to the logics at play can explain better how they make sense of hybrid practices.

To understand what motivates individuals to either embrace, disregard, or reject hybrid practices, the professors conducted a comparative study involving three rounds of in-depth interviews with 14 HNWI from 2015 to 2018, focusing on their responses to the hybrid practice of impact investing. This refers to "investments made into companies, organizations, and funds with the intention to generate social or environmental impact alongside a financial return." Doing so, they discovered 2 key interpretative mechanisms: analogical reasoning and the degree of adherence.

ANALOGICAL REASONING: WHEN COMPARISON DRIVES UNDERSTANDING

From their interviews, the researchers observed that, in order to devise an appropriate response to impact investing, the interviewees spontaneously compared it to either charitable giving or mainstream investing. When something is novel and unconventional, individuals tend to compare it to a 'reference practice' that is traditionally associated with one of the constituent logics, in our case, philanthropy or finance.

The researchers noticed that the interviewees interpreted impact investing as either an alternative to charitable giving (i.e., investments in impact-first ventures instead of grants to nonprofit organizations) or an alternative to investing (i.e., investments in impact-first ventures instead of investments in traditional, for-profit ventures). Once this interpretation was made, the individual either accepted or rejected the hybrid practice, depending on their degree of adherence to the logics at play.

DEGREE OF ADHERENCE: THE GOLDEN MIDDLE GROUND

To evaluate the individual's adherence to a hybrid practice, the researchers established a 3-degree scale (novice, familiar, identified). Using this scale, the researchers first discovered that if an individual was novice (low degree of adherence) to one of impact investing's logics (finance or philanthropy), then it was impossible for them to make sense of it, and this led them to ignore the hybrid practice. In the study, a woman well versed in philanthropy but with no investment knowledge did not understand impact investing and rejected it accordingly. Perhaps more surprisingly, Gautier et al. found that people with a strong adherence to the focal logic – made salient by the analogy – were more likely to reject a hybrid practice. For example, an interviewee with a long career in brokerage rejected impact investing because it conflicted with profit maximization, a core tenet of the finance logic – replacing the ROI with impact assessment didn't make sense to him because it.

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In essence, where some scholars would argue that either no prior knowledge or a very good knowledge of the logics being combined would facilitate the adoption of a hybrid practice, Prof. Gautier and his fellow researchers found that the opposite is actually true: people merely familiar with the logics at play were more likely to understand and adopt the hybrid practice than the others.

ADOPTION OF HYBRID PRACTICES: THE KEY IS CONTEXTUAL

In addition to contributing to sensemaking and institutional theory, the findings of Profs. Gautier, Pache and Santos offer practical contributions for practitioners involved in promoting hybrid practices.

We saw that contrary to what one might think, a public's strong identification with financial logic can be more of a hindrance than a help to the adoption of impact investment practices. In consequence, as an entrepreneur wishing to disseminate impact investment, you will need to gauge your audience carefully and adapt your discourse accordingly. In this scenario, the researchers suggest that professional investors may find the idea of 'venture philanthropy' more appealing than 'impact investing' because the former emphasizes philanthropy over finance, potentially reducing resistance from staunch financiers.

Extending the example of impact investing to all hybrid practices, it now seems essential to consider the key contextual mechanisms involved in individual interpretation in order to understand what drives their adoption, and act accordingly. Are you now ready to spread hybrid practices? ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hybrid practices are practices that combine core elements of different institutional logics in novel ways (e.g., impact investing combines elements of finance and philanthropy).
- Current research in institutional theory lacks information on how individuals develop responses to contrasting demands. This new research shows that people's life stories and relations to logics influences their reaction to hybrid practices.
- To understand a hybrid practice, the individual first instinctively makes an analogy with a 'pure' reference practice (e.g., viewing impact investing as an alternative to private equity in for-profit ventures).
- A hybrid practice is more likely be adopted if the individual is merely familiar with the two logics at play. If they are novice or identified, he practice will likely be ignored or rejected.

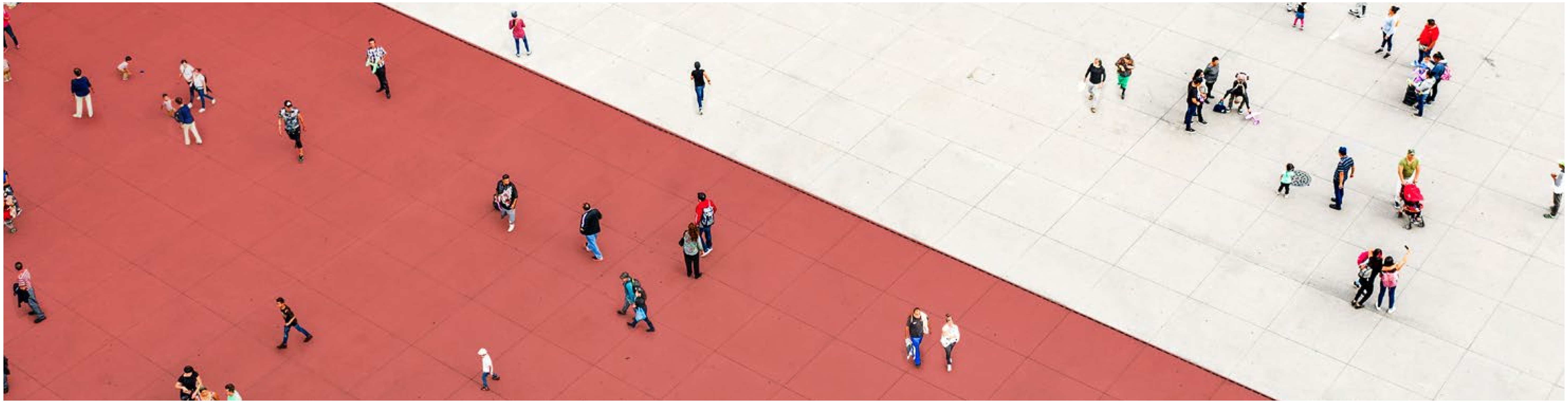
ACCOUNTING DEMOCRACY: WHY WE NEED COMPANIES TO DISCLOSE THEIR POLITICAL DONATIONS

> **Shareholders are also citizens, and by this definition have the right to know how their money is used in the society they live in.**

Which companies disclose information on their political donations? When do they do it and where? How do they justify them? And why is it important for democracy to have companies make their political donations known to the public? Dr. **Edward Tello,** from **Monash University (Monash Business School),** along with Associate Professor **James Hazelton** and Dr. Shane Vincent Long, from **Macquarie University,** provides a detailed analysis of political donation reporting by companies in Australia and its implications for democracy.

Related research: *Australian corporate political donation disclosures - Frequency, quality, and characteristics associated with disclosing companies,* Edward Tello, James Hazelton and Shane Vincent Long, Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2019).

Yes, Minister is a 1980s TV show that you, especially if from the UK, have most probably heard of. It is about the newly appointed Minister for Administrative Affairs, Jim Hacker, trying to push forward his policies, and his Permanent Secretary, Sir Humphrey Appleby, trying to maintain the status quo. In one poignant episode, Hacker supports a policy which would ultimately lead to a decrease in revenue for some universities. Appleby, an alumna of the prestigious fictional Baillie College, which would primarily be affected, invites him to one of its renowned dinner parties. Here it is insinuated, that Hacker could potentially receive an honorary doctorate and would be privy to more dinner party invitations. Since Hacker does not want to sever this relationship, he finds an exception in his policy for Baillie College.



Of course, this is a TV show from the UK and more than that, it is over 40 years old. However, the general idea behind it, particularly this episode, is still relevant in modern times – in Australia and worldwide. In the course of the TV show, Appleby and Hacker rarely faced consequences, nor did the organisations they dealt with since little of these relationships was made public.

In modern-day Australia, parties have to report the donations they receive to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), which compiles donations in its database that is publicly available. However, companies are not required to disclose political party donations in their company reports. This lack of transparency on the companies' part has implications for democracy – an issue which Dr. Edward Tello *et al.* have analysed in their research: Why should corporate political donations be disclosed in company reports? And, going one step further, why companies choose (or not) to provide this information.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

In general, even if donations are not intended to be an outright bribe, the mere existence of a receiver-donor relationship is connected to certain expectations. Indeed, many experts argue that some donors lobby.

Although not all companies have an involvement in the political process, and others donate for altruistic reasons, some might pose a threat to the political process. The latter have both the motive and the means: Firstly, they are oftentimes the first ones to be affected by changes in government policy and regulations and thus have the greatest interest in influencing politics in their favour. Secondly, companies possess the resources to hire a highly qualified lobbying team and make their opinions heard. This is why companies' interests are disproportionately reflected in contemporary politics.

While this background would provide a strong argument to ban corporate political donations altogether, parties rely on them to operate. Therefore, finding guidelines for transparency is crucial for a healthy democracy.

As such, having a full disclosure in company reports would benefit stakeholders (including shareholders and society at large) locally and globally. After all, shareholders are also citizens and by this definition have the right to know how their money is used in the society they live in. On the opposite side of the spectrum, there is a risk that managers may use donations to advance their managerial interests which might come at the expense of society goals. Lastly, disclosure in company reports would help close loopholes in current reporting systems and include donations made to countries with limited disclosure laws and weak democracies.

BUSINESS AND POLITICS: TWO THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT GO TOGETHER?

Companies being involved in politics is a relatively new phenomenon. Indeed, until the 1970s it was virtually non-existent. Whenever government regulations led to an increase in production costs, companies could simply increase prices to recoup the loss. However, as competition increased, and this practice was no longer possible, companies started lobbying for their interests in politics.

In an idealistic world, there are two mechanisms constraining company power: Regulations and the Kantian idea that companies act for stakeholder benefit. However, as we see more rapid technological innovation, regulations struggle to keep up with these changes. And, even more detrimental to the idea of regulations, is that they are influenced by the very entities they are trying to regulate.

To contribute to the conversation on accountability, transparency, and democracy, but also to paint a more complete picture of sustainability reporting, Tello and his colleagues analyse the quality and extent of current voluntary disclosures in company reports. They acquired a list of donor companies from the AEC database, then investigated the reports of the donating companies. Later, they categorised the information disclosed and also analysed the details provided on donations in the related company reports. Lastly, after analysing the content, they drew conclusions on the methods of justification the companies used. Indeed, here the researchers seek to enhance the policy for disclosing political donations – a key means of managing the threat to democracy.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Tello and his co-researchers found that companies donate significantly less during non-federal election years. During this time, however, the most significant number of donors came from the financial and insurance industry. This can be linked to the size of the industry itself, the financial and insurance industry – the largest – also gave the largest number of donations. Interestingly, many companies also chose to donate to several political parties at once.

In general, any kind of company reporting was low – between 21 and 31% – and from those, only 20% disclosed political donations in any form. Very often, companies choose not to discuss the amount donated at all and only make vague references to the practice of political donations.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

Tello et al. further draw on the idea of legitimacy in their research: For a company to experience long-term growth, it indeed requires society's acceptance of its role and activities, as it is acting and affecting society itself. In a sense, a "social contract" exists between the company and society. So, what happens when a company seemingly "breaks" this contract? Or in the framework of corporate political donations, how do companies – if at all – justify and present them in their company reports?

Using the results of an Australian survey conducted in 2014 and claims made by Evans et al., the researchers argued that there is a legitimacy gap in relation to this topic and society expectations. Then, the researchers used O'Donovan's legitimacy matrix, which includes four potential tactics, to classify their findings. According to the matrix, companies can respond to a perceived threat to their legitimacy by either:

a) completely overlooking the issue

b) attempting to modify the social norms and values that have resulted in the criticism

c) changing the perception of the company, and

d) conforming to follow the public's values.

Dr. Tello, Hazelton, and Long discovered that many companies rationalize their political donations by citing community or corporate interests. They claim to help with public policy development or to establish relationships. And in general, companies prioritize justifying political donations to shareholders, with society being only a secondary concern.

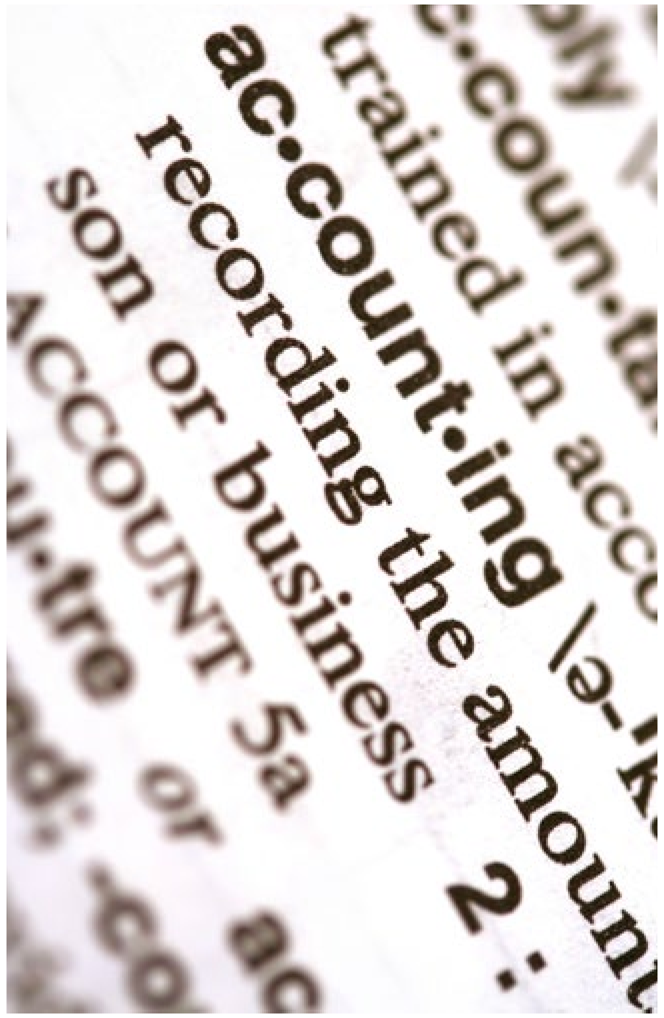
After categorizing companies' motivations, Dr. Tello et al found that those who justified used different justifications. However, the researchers found that the great majority tend to avoid the problem altogether by either not disclosing any donations at all, or only making vague references to them in reports. Only a few companies try to alter the perceptions of society in their reports, and even fewer announced in their reports that they stopped political donations. None of the companies reviewed tried to change the values of society. However, they also used very factual statements about their donating activities in their reports.

SO HOW CAN WE ACCOUNT FOR DEMOCRACY?

At the moment, companies only disclose their political donations arbitrarily, if at all. Even in cases where reporting is done, it is often biased in an effort to justify these donations in the first place. This being said, disclosure regulations differ in different countries, with the USA and the UK having the more advanced ones.

In Australia, there have been parliamentary enquiries on political donations at state level and federal level, although there is more that can be done. As a first step in the right direction, companies should be obliged to have at least some minimal disclosures on their political donation activities in their company reports. These would include the number of donations made in each region, the existence and details of a donation policy as well as the purpose of the donations. Furthermore, companies should refer to the AEC's (government) database which lists their donations.

In the end, is democracy for sale as Peter Geoghegan argues in his book or not? This issue is debatable. ///



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- In Australia, companies are not required to disclose any political donations in their company reports leading to a lack of transparency and accountability in the democratic due process.
- While not all companies do it, some have both the motivation and the capabilities to efficiently lobby for their interests in politics, leading to their disproportionate representation in politics and threatening democratic foundations.
- Disclosing political donations in company reports would reduce the risk of managerial interests conflicting with societal interests, allow shareholders to be informed how their money is used in the society they live in, and close loopholes in reporting systems, for example concerning subsidiary donations or donations to foreign countries.
- Currently, companies do not sufficiently disclose their political donations on a voluntary basis.
- Arguably companies have an interest in legitimizing their donations to society, but a large number of donating companies choose not to deal with this topic altogether or trying to alter perceptions of the company's dealing through different framing. Some justifications were factual.

NAVIGATING THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE GLOBAL RICE SUPPLY CHAIN

> **The complexities surrounding rice cultivation require a multifaceted approach for sustainability.**

Rice is more than just a staple food; it contributes to nearly one-fifth of all human consumed calories globally. The reliance on this cereal draws a clear picture of its indispensable role in ensuring food security, especially in developing countries. Today, rice consumption is increasing globally, while productivity is declining due to numerous factors. **Julia Hani** and **Hatim Issoufaly** at **Ksapa** explore.

With kind acknowledgement to Ksapa. First published on the Ksapa blog.

With 90% of worldwide rice production concentrated in Asia, nations like China, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Vietnam are pivotal to the global rice supply. Rice consumption however is largely decentralized and distributed globally.

Smallholder farmers are integral to this supply chain, making their challenges and opportunities essential to address. As global rice demand is projected to rise by 25% over the next 25 years, understanding the dynamics of rice supply chain sustainability is not just timely but crucial.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries have decided to drastically reduce or limit their export in order to strengthen their food security stock, it reveled more than ever the political lever that rice represents especially in Asia. South-East Asian countries had divergent rice policies: Vietnam had to restrict the volumes exported to secure local consumption while exceptionally securing some reserves for the Philippines which usually imports 90% of its rice from the country. On the other hand, Thailand used the export restriction in the neighboring countries to its own benefit. Using the excess of rice available countrywide, Thailand was able to cater imports' needs and a temporary increase of demand for Thai rice was observed.

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GLOBAL DYNAMICS OF RICE CULTIVATION

Rice cultivation is the lifeline for billions globally. Its dominance in the global dietary landscape and its cultivation practices have evolved, responding to both the changing environment and socio-economic drivers. The current rice cultivation paradigm is marked by the extensive use of the green revolution package while natural resources context has radically changed. Indeed, designed originally to maximize yield, these seeds are a double-edged sword as their productivity is linked to a heightened dependence on herbicides, water, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. While such practices have pushed production figures, they are posing today environmental and health challenges that have become priorities during the last decade.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- When continuously flooded, rice cultivation is potent sources of methane – a greenhouse gas with 25 times the global warming potential of CO2 over a century. Methane emissions from rice land account for approximately 10% of global agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. With countries like Vietnam attributing 50% of their agricultural emissions to rice cultivation, it's evident that addressing methane emissions is both an environmental and economic priority.

- Higher temperatures observed due to climate change, especially occurring at the flowering stage of rice cultures induce flower sterility. This directly impacts the pollination and development of the crops, resulting in reduced yields.

- Rice cultivation is inherently water-intensive. It's estimated that producing 1 kg of rice requires about 2,500 liters of water. In regions like India, where 44% of the land is drought-prone, such consumption is unsustainable and sometimes worsen by public policies to reduce production cost. Indeed, water conservation regulations in farming systems in India remains absent. Farmers have access to free water, and development projects up to 218 were focused on building water canals for irrigation, proven to be very wasteful. Moreover, in countries like China, excessive water extraction for rice farming has led to dropping water tables, further intensify the water crisis. With the world crawling towards potential water scarcity, sustainable water management in rice cultivation isn't just desirable; it's imperative.

SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

The majority of rice is grown by smallholder farmers, who face a variety of challenges.

- Ageing populations in rural areas, complemented with the youth's migration to urban centers, threaten the future of rice farming.

- Fluctuating global prices impact directly the prosperity of these farmers. They are frequently dependent on monsoon rains, with some regions already experiencing water stress, which is expected to intensify with the predicted climatic changes.

- With rice becoming less profitable for farmers, it is used as a secondary crop for household consumption. Smallholders are switching towards more profitable cash crops and using their yield as daily consumption.

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) estimates that, traditional rice-farming landscapes could see a decline in yields by up to 40% due to climate change caused by severe drought as seen in some states in India, while demand is continuously growing. These figures not only underscore the vulnerability of rice farmers but also emphasize the need for adaptive and resilient farming techniques as well as attractive purchasing prices that are not including today the high environmental cost related to this crop.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

By observing the global rice trade flows throughout the years, remarkable events can be noted :

- Severe drought episodes in 2018 have highly impacted the general production and export, observed in a reduces trade friction between major countries.

- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, several countries reduced their exports to guaranty national food security, which lead to an increase in international rice prices.

This price fluctuation not only threatens the political synergies and trade networks in place, they also impact the countries at stake which rely on rice to ensure nutritious intake and food security for the most vulnerable communities.

TOWARDS NET-ZERO CULTIVATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND PATHWAYS

The journey to net-zero in the rice cultivation sector is a colossal task, given the complexity, variability and scale of its production. Due to its methane emissions, rice plots emit 2 to 5 more times than other staple crops. Recognizing rice as a high-GHG crop opens doors to climate financing. Directing these funds towards rural communities and small-holder farmers can promote climate resilient cultivation practices, aiding the move towards net-zero emissions.

**Link to Carbon sequestration article*

METHANE MITIGATION

Paddy cultivation, especially when submerged, are significant contributors to methane emissions. While traditional rice farming has relied on continuous flooding, alternative methods like the Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) technique can reduce methane emissions by up to 50%. AWD involves allowing the paddies to dry for certain periods before re-flooding, disrupting the methane production cycle. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) has been pivotal in promoting AWD, noting that beyond methane reduction, AWD can save up to 30% of water used in cultivation. This methodology has been tested by Ksapa's agronomy expert In Thailand part of a smallholder livelihood Improvement project.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Empowering farmers with knowledge and skills is essential. In addition to AWD, programs that focus on teaching farmers about Good Agricultural Practices including soil preparation and fertility management, sowing and weeding, sustainable inputs, home-made production and residue management can yield significant dividends.

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

Given that rice is a high-GHG crop, there's a tangible opportunity to attract climate financing. Farmers and cooperatives can switch to sustainable practices such as AWD previously described, which leads to reduced carbon emissions and earn carbon credits.

CASE STUDIES: INSIGHTS AND LEARNINGS

EFFORTS IN AFRICA TO IMPROVE NUTRITIOUS VALUE OF PRODUCED RICE

The African continent holds significant potential for rice cultivation. Yet, vast expanses suitable for rice production remain underutilized. Indeed, more than 230 ha are estimated to be suitable for rice production, only 12 ha are actually being used. Current yields are concerning, especially given the rising demand in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa.

However, initiatives in countries like Burundi, where improved rice varieties and comprehensive farmer training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) have led to a 73% increase in production, demonstrate the transformative potential of targeted interventions.

VIETNAM'S SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

With rice production being a significant contributor to Vietnam's greenhouse gas emissions, the country's commitment to the Paris Agreement's emission reduction targets is noteworthy. Vietnam has incorporated sustainable agricultural practices in its National Development Agenda and collaborates with international partners to promote sustainable rice cultivation. Efforts include creating private sector toolkits for sustainable rice value chains and developing monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) frameworks.

PHILIPPINES INNOVATIONS

The Philippines showcases the benefits of technological integration in sustainable rice cultivation. Their national pest surveillance and early-warning system, along with a shift to dry direct-seeded rice, has led to a 23% decrease in methane emissions.

CHALLENGES AND INTERVENTIONS

Today, most of the projects including rice production are either very rare or implemented very slowly or on very limited pieces of land. Because of its political dimension, projects related to rice value chain usually involve a large number of stakeholders with different interests. It's urgent to set up light implementation processes with quick impacts in order to foster smallholder farmers to adopt massively sustainable GAPs.

These sustainable practices will have a tremendous impact due to the number of rice farm all around the world. Indeed, for the past 10 years Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) and System of Rice Intensification (SRI) were among the most popular and effective production systems demonstrating positive impacts on water consumption and soil fertility management.

However these systems haven't been adopted massively because of constraints at different levels: awareness, administrative or operational that prevented farmers from understanding, owning, adopting and transferring such kind of low tech innovation. Even with carbon finance that would be an accelerator to shift to thriftier practices, technical and administrative implementation deter most of the supply chain stakeholder to engage on a large scale.

The complexities surrounding rice cultivation, from environmental implications to socio-economic and political challenges, require a multifaceted approach for sustainability. As the global demand for rice will continue to grow, forging sustainable pathways is not just preferable but essential. Understanding these challenges and opportunities is a key to guiding businesses towards sustainable decisions and practices in the rice sector. ///

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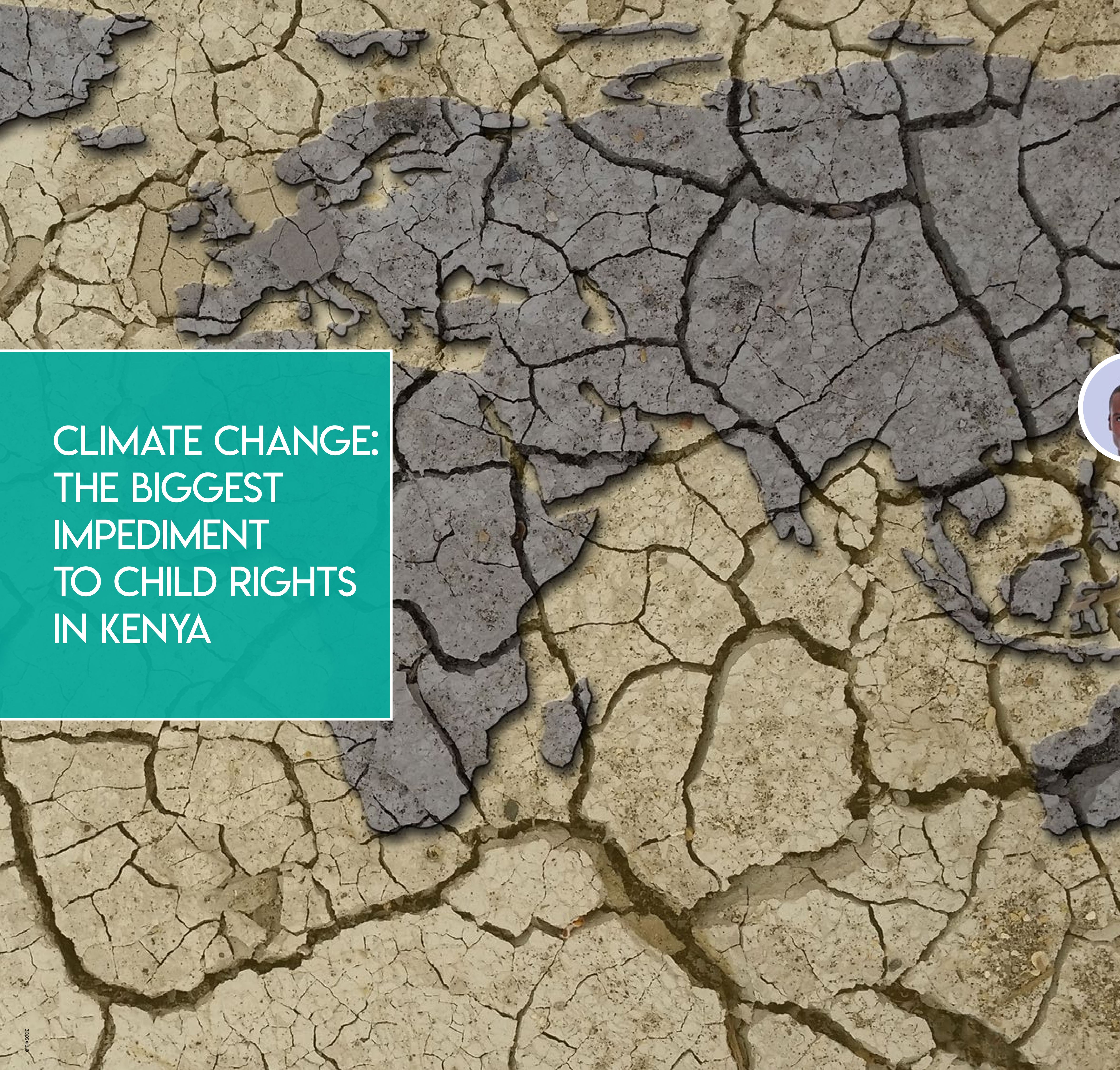
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 90% of worldwide rice production is concentrated in Asia. Rice consumption however is largely decentralized and distributed globally.
- Smallholder farmers are integral to this supply chain and global rice demand is projected to rise by 25% over the next 25 years.
- Designed originally to maximize yield, rice seeds are a double-edged sword: their productivity is linked to a heightened dependence on herbicides, water, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides.
- Environmental impacts include methane emissions from rice land (approx. 10% of global agricultural greenhouse gas emissions).
- Social impacts include: manpower issues due to ageing and youth migration, fluctuating global prices and climate change impacting farmer prosperity, smallholders switching towards more profitable cash crops.
- Governments need to encourage and facilitate Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) and System of Rice Intensification (SRI): among the most popular and effective production systems demonstrating positive impacts on water consumption and soil fertility management.
- The complexities surrounding rice cultivation, from environmental implications to socio-economic and political challenges, require a multifaceted approach for sustainability.



CLIMATE CHANGE: THE BIGGEST IMPEDIMENT TO CHILD RIGHTS IN KENYA

> **Climate change risks pose serious threats to Kenya's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those relating to human rights and children.**

Brian Kaitano, Maseno University Kenya alumnus and young voice writer on Kenyan affairs in the context of the UN SDGs, shares the adverse effects of climate change on children's rights in Kenya and how to tackle them.

Kenya has a young, ambitious, and well-educated workforce eager to contribute to the development of the country and the world at large. According to the 2019 National Housing and Population Census Report, Kenya has a population of about 47,564,296. With children representing a sizeable 48% of this, they represent a key segment of society and attract consistent government efforts to promote human rights. Moreover, the Government of Kenya (GoK) become a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on 30th July 1990 becoming the 20th member state to ratify the instrument.

Enter climate change, the risks of which pose serious threats to Kenya's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those relating to human rights and children. The country's economy is largely dependent on rain-fed agriculture, tourism and natural resources, sectors that are susceptible to climate variability, change and extreme weather. Kenya's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that was submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in December 2020 notes that excessive climate change results in socio-economic losses estimated at 3-4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually, thereby impeding development efforts.

Human activities contribute greatly to the occurrence and severity of environmental hazards such as floods and droughts in Kenya. Other causes include low and unreliable rainfall causing little or no vegetation, high temperatures which cause high rates of evaporation, combined with hot dry winds, or low temperatures which reduces air capacity to hold moisture causing regions to receive little or no rain.

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CHILD RIGHTS DEPRIVATIONS RESULTING FROM CLIMATE CHANGE IN KENYA

Children are the largest and most vulnerable group affected by climate change. As temperatures increase and water becomes scarcer, it is children who will feel the deadliest impact of waterborne diseases and malnutrition with thousands made sick by polluted water. Up to two-thirds of preventable illness and deaths from environmental hazards is experienced by children predominantly aged under 5 years.

Indeed, climate change carries with it a long list of direct or indirect effects on children. When water is scarce, it is the children who bear the brunt, often walking long distances in search of water sources. Not only does water scarcity expose children to environmental and health-related risks, it also leads to safety-related risks such as sexual abuse, displacement of children and their families with an impact on children's welfare, and, due to long hours spent searching for water, depriving children of their right to education.

At the same time, developmental gains in education are offset due to damage or destruction of school facilities, extended disruption of education, and limited access to schooling. As a coping mechanism in some parts of coastal Kenya, children engage in transactional sex which is detrimental to their well-being. Moreover, data shows an increase in cases of child marriage escalating during drought seasons as a coping mechanism in exchange for dowry to feed the rest of the siblings.

Added to that, air pollution in Kenya is an increasing environmental hazard that affects communities living in both rural areas and towns. It contributes to health complications – asthma, dust allergy, heart disease and also cancer. Burning fossil fuels and other environmental contaminants mean that children remain at increased risk of respiratory infections including pneumonia.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOK TO PROMOTE CHILD RIGHTS

The UNCRC was integrated in Kenyan law by enacting the Children Act in 2001, a major milestone in the promotion and protection of children's rights and welfare in Kenya. To address the emerging issues brought by technological, socio-cultural, economic, and political changes and align the Children Act of 2001 to the Constitution, the state Party implemented the Children Bill No. 58 of 2021 that was passed by parliament. There are also numerous appropriate child rights specific laws, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines to further safeguard the rights and welfare of children in the country. With all these efforts in place however, children in Kenya continue to experience many challenges including those brought about by the effects of climate change.

SOLUTIONS BY THE GOK IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

The GoK has put measures in place to pursue a low carbon and resilient development pathway to help realize its Vision 2030: to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing middle-income country. Furthermore, Kenya submitted an updated, more ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on December 24, 2020, with a commitment to abate greenhouse gases by 32% by 2030 relative to the business-as-usual scenario, and in line with its sustainable development agenda and national circumstances.

Indeed, Kenya is a leader in in addressing climate change and was one of the first countries in Africa to enact a comprehensive law and policy to guide national and local climate action. The Climate Change Act 2016 and the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2018-2022 provided guidance for low-carbon and climate resilient development. Kenya's priorities are articulated through these and other instruments including: adaptation afforestation and reforestation, landscape restoration, climate-smart agriculture, geothermal and clean energy development energy efficiency, and drought and flood risk management.

CHALLENGES FACING THE GOK WHILE TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Despite the considerable progress made in the last decade towards building governance systems for climate change adaptation in Kenya, implementation still limits progress. Some of the challenges facing the GoK while tackling climate change include:

- Communication disconnect between national, local, and community levels
- Limited technical capacity and funding
- Political interference
- Lack of effective public education
- And absence of functional implementation structures.

However, Kenya is not alone. The country has received much support from international organizations including World Vision, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), among many. For example, USAID supports GoK developments and climate priorities through programs and partnerships addressing climate adaptation and resilience building, renewable energy, and natural climate solutions. USAID has also supported the development of key GoK policy documents, including the Climate Change Framework Policy, the Climate Change Act, and the Climate Change Finance Policy.

Every child has the right to both a healthy and safe environment today – and a sustainable future. There is no time to waste, and children are asking us to act now. Without support to adapt, climate change will continue to affect Kenya's children with many current impacts increasing in intensity. Kenya needs the comprehensive expansion of adaptation programs to respond to the impact of climate change both now and in the future to alleviate the vulnerability that children face from the worst impacts of climate change. In that light, to safeguard the rights of children in Kenya, a range of programs are required to provide children and communities with the support, skills and infrastructure they need to survive and develop in the face of climatic uncertainty. These programs can include interventions such as:

- Early warning systems for malnutrition to ensure preventive measures to counter the impact of food insecurity on children.
- Rainwater harvesting and flood proof sanitization to guarantee safe sources of drinking water, prevent adverse health risks to children, and to stop the spread of disease.
- An increase in the number of child-friendly schools and child protection centers in key regions in Kenya to ensure that children have the right services in place to meet their needs in the face livelihood insecurity and the increasing rural-to-urban migration that may be triggered by climate change.
- Increased health preventive programs to combat the migration of disease vectors to new regions and to prevent an increase of disease in existing regions
- Strong cooperation from local, national and international levels to facilitate funding and other support in tackling climate change while promoting child rights in Kenya. ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Children represent 48% of the Kenyan population and attract consistent government efforts to promote human rights. The Government of Kenya (GoK) become a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on 30th July 1990 becoming the 20th member state to ratify the instrument.
- Climate change risks pose serious threats to Kenya's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those relating to human rights and children.
- The country's economy is largely dependent on rain-fed agriculture, tourism and natural resources, sectors that are susceptible to climate variability, change and extreme weather.
- Up to two-thirds of preventable illness and deaths from environmental hazards is experienced by children predominantly aged under 5 years.
- Climate change carries with it a long list of direct or indirect effects on children: Water scarcity exposes children to environmental and health-related risks, as well as safety-related risks such as sexual abuse, displacement of children and their families with an impact on children's welfare, and, due to long hours spent searching for water, depriving children of their right to education.
- A range of programs are required to provide children and communities with the support, skills and infrastructure they need to survive and develop in the face of climatic uncertainty:
  - Early warning systems for malnutrition; Rainwater harvesting and flood proof sanitization;
  - An increase in the number of child-friendly schools and child protection centers in key regions in Kenya;
  - Increased health preventive programs to combat the migration of disease vectors to new regions;
  - Strong cooperation from local, national and other international levels to facilitate funding and other support in tackling climate change while promoting child rights in Kenya.

CSR'S RIPPLE EFFECT ON WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

> **Employees receive a feeling of satisfaction knowing that they are working for a company that prioritizes or participates in CSR practices.**

A spotlight on **Joana S. P. Story, FGV EAESP,** & **Filipa Castanheira, Nova School of Business and Economics,** and their research insight on CSR and workplace dynamics included in the recently published Routledge CoBS book **The Employee and the Post-Pandemic Workplace: Towards a new, enlightened working environment.**

CSR's ripple effect on workplace dynamics, by CoBS Editor Ana Sofia Bello. Related research: Corporate social responsibility and employee performance: Mediation role of job satisfaction and affective commitment, Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management. J. S. P. Story, F. Castanheira, Wiley, https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1752.

CSR ideals are becoming more and more popular in the corporate sphere, which leads many corporations and professionals to wonder what the effects of these efforts are on societies. Rather, how can companies profit from these social resolutions? Many of these responsibilities that companies undertake are costly and, on the surface, seem to only benefit needs outside of the corporation. Is it possible that a company can internally become more efficient when instilling these practices?

Professors Joana S. P. Story at FGV EAESP and Filipa Castanheira at Nova School of Business and Economics investigate this matter further with their research featured in The Employee and The Post Pandemic Workplace. They delve into the difference between external and internal CSR and how each one has their own effect on companies' workforces regarding employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. With their research, companies and organizations are motivated to continue implementing more sustainable practices in and out of the company, knowing that it will mold a more productive workforce.

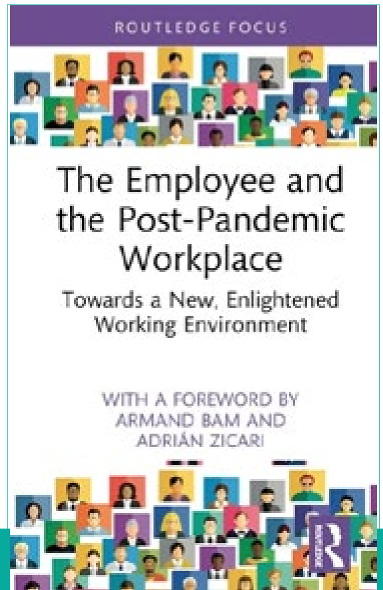
THE IMPACT OF RESPONSIBILITY

"Internal CSR practices can provide the necessary resources that can improve the workplace especially when the individual resources are running low because of the pandemic", says Professor Story. Economies, companies, organizations, and individuals are just starting to recover from the effects of the pandemic. This research points out that Internal CSR practices such as employee working conditions and career opportunities are beneficial to "individual performance as it increases job satisfaction". These practices provide employees with incentives, and a sense of security and value to their position – especially important given that many individuals are still recovering in some way from the pandemic.

Implementing external CSR practices involves more of the public actions that many of us are increasingly witnessing – environmental protection, community development, sustainable development, among them. These practices have a subtler effect on a company's workforce. The research shows that employees receive a feeling of satisfaction knowing that they are working for a company that prioritizes or participates in CSR practices. This satisfaction will inevitably increase commitment and performance.

THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

Professors Story and Castanheira's research was able to articulate the impacts that CSR methods have on a company's workforce, whether that involves external or internal methods. As a whole, CSR has a positive impact on employee attitudes and their individual performance. And as we navigate toward a new, enlightened working environment, it becomes clear that CSR is not just a societal obligation but a strategic investment that shapes a more resilient, engaged, and productive workforce. ///



ROUTLEDGE

Discover the book chapter Committed Companies: Do they create happier, higher performing employees?
Based on Joana S.P. Story and Filipa Castanheira's research in the book:
The Employee and the Post-Pandemic Workplace: Towards a new, enlightened working environment

UNEQUAL INHERITANCES ON THE RISE AS FAMILIES CHANGE

> One important question is why so many individuals do not write wills.

Jill Young Miller writes on research recently published by Prof. **Robert Pollak, Olin Business School,** revealing large disparities between family types when it comes to leaving inheritance to descendants.

Related research: Unequal Bequests, Marco Francesconi, Robert A. Pollak, Domenico Tabasso, European Economic Review, 2023, Science Direct, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2023.104513.

With divorces, remarriages, living together and childbearing outside of marriage, American families have experienced massive changes in the past 30 years.

The changes are hitting their kids in the wallet, to the advantage of some and disadvantage of others. More than one-third of parents with wills plan to divide their estates unequally among their children, according to the paper "Unequal Bequests," newly published in the European Economic Review. The research also discovered that a staggering number of older Americans don't have a will. Thirty percent of people 70 and older don't.

Plans for unequal inheritances are concentrated in "weak relationships." Those are defined as families with stepchildren and families with genetic children with little or no contact with their parents. Stepparents and parents with no contact with their kids may be less motivated than parents in traditional families to provide resources to children with whom they don't share genes or haven't shared homes, said Robert Pollak, Hernreich Distinguished Professor of Economics, and his coauthors.

Children in weak relationships also may be less willing than children in traditional families to assist disabled older parents, especially those with whom they have no genetic connection or only briefly shared a home, according to the paper. Children of cohabiting couples who break up and re-partner are substantially more likely than other children to have weak relationships with adults.

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'MUCH MORE UNEQUAL'

"We have shown that bequests are much more unequal now than in the recent past and much more unequal than generally recognized," Pollak said. In simple families (families without stepchildren or no-contact children), equal bequests are the dominant pattern. In other families, however, the research found substantial inequality in bequest intentions and final dispositions.

The research used a large and nationally representative US sample from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) from 1995–2014. The HRS is a survey of more than 24,000 Americans over 50 who are interviewed every two years. If a respondent has a spouse or partner, the spouse or partner is invited to become an HRS respondent.

Economic theory on end-of-life transfers assumes that individuals, or at least older ones, make wills, says Pollak. "We find, instead, that parents often fail to write wills and, either by design or by default, rely on intestacy law to determine the distribution of their estates."

When people die without a valid will, their property passes by "intestate succession" to heirs according to state law. In other words, if you don't have a will, the state will make one for you. For parents with stepchildren, relying on intestacy law means leaving everything to genetic and legally-adopted children and nothing to stepchildren. For no-contact parents, the effect is to treat contact and no-contact genetic children equally.

'PUZZLING'

"If parents understand the most basic provisions of the intestacy default, this finding is puzzling," the authors write. "It implies that parents who have had no contact with some of their genetic children are more likely to treat all of their genetic children equally than are parents who have maintained contact with all of their genetic children."

The probability of having a will increases with age. But of the HRS respondents who died between 1995 and 2012, nearly 40 percent died intestate.

WEAK RELATIONSHIPS

A distinguishing feature of the research is its focus on "weak relationships." Think of parents with stepchildren and parents with genetic children with whom they have limited or no contact.

The proportion of parents ages 50 and over with more than one child who reported having wills in which they treated their children unequally increased steadily between 1995 and 2014, from around 27% to more than 36%.

Parents with high school or lower educations are about 13% more likely not to have wills than parents with college degrees or higher (47 versus 34%, respectively). The differences by race are larger: Three-quarters of Black and Hispanic parents don't have a will. About one-third of their white non-Hispanic counterparts don't.

Standard economic models ignore weak relationships, states Pollak. The assumption is that all children are born to a married couple who remain married to each other. When one spouse dies, the surviving spouse is assumed not to remarry.

"By ignoring divorce, re-partnering or remarriage, economic models fail to recognize the increased complexity of the family," says Pollak. ///

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Divorces, remarriages, living together and childbearing outside of marriage have meant massive changes for US families in the last 30 years.
- These changes have a financial impact on children – to the advantage of some and disadvantage of others. More than one-third of parents with wills plan to divide their estates unequally among their children.
- Families with stepchildren and families with genetic children with little or no contact with their parents are less motivated to provide resources. Other disadvantaged categories include children of cohabiting couples who break up and re-partner.
- In simple families (families without stepchildren or no-contact children), equal bequests are the dominant pattern.
- A majority of older Americans do not have a will, including 30% of those 70 years +. In this case, the state will make a will for you. Intestacy law means leaving everything to genetic and legally-adopted children and nothing to stepchildren.
- Parents with high school or lower educations are about 13% more likely not to have wills than parents with college degrees or higher (47 versus 34%, respectively). The differences by race are larger: Three-quarters of Black and Hispanic parents don't have a will. About one-third of their white non-Hispanic counterparts don't.
- By ignoring divorce, re-partnering or remarriage, economic models fail to recognize the increased complexity of the family.

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INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION: BETTER TOGETHER

> **The fact is that we are in a world designed for a different scenario, one that has already passed.**

As four generations work together for the first time, what are the frictions that can arise and how can we overcome them? Professors **Celia de Anca** and **Concepción Galdón, IE Business School,** draw on their research to answer.

By Celia de Anca and Concepción Galdón. Originally published on **IE Insights** under the title Better Together: Intergenerational collaboration – with kind acknowledgements. **Related research:** Intergenerational Collaboration against the challenges of the demographic transition (in Spanish).

We are living longer and longer. Indeed, life expectancy around the world is twice as long as it was at the beginning of the 19th century, with the latest data showing that the current global life expectancy is now just over 72 years. That is across the board – as is the fact that women everywhere in the world are living longer than men. For example, according to the World Bank, the life expectancy in Spain at birth is 83.5 years and women over 80 years old account for 7.7% of the country's population.

Not only are we living longer, but we are also living better. Scientific and social advancements have not only significantly extended the average life expectancy but, in general, allowed people to reach their later years in better conditions. The most relevant indicator is the healthy life expectancy indicator, i.e., the average number of years a person is expected to live in good health (in the absence of functional limitations or disability). The result of this is that we are currently living at a time in which multiple generations coexist.

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A WORLD DESIGNED FOR AN OLD SCENARIO

Research from the Observatory of Demography and Generational Diversity* looks at our new intergenerational realities and analyzes the opportunities they offer for the future.

Using data from Spain, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay (countries which have a range of a healthy life expectancy from 66 years in Mexico to 72 in Spain), the report finds that, in spite of the differences in the demographic pyramids amongst these five countries (for example, Spain and Uruguay have a more balanced age distribution whereas Columbia, Mexico, and Paraguay trend younger), there is a new intergenerational scenario emerging with challenges that show consistency throughout the five countries and could prove quite relevant in other parts of the world.

For example, the types of health challenges, especially in mental health, vary by age: higher levels of anxiety are often found in the young, and greater depression in the elderly. Meanwhile, employment poses a plethora of challenges across age groups as does generating the income needed for all these generations.

The fact is that we are in a world designed for a different scenario, one that has already passed, and as the parable says, pouring new wine into old wineskins will make the skins burst and the wine spill out. Or, in this case of multiple generations, there will be significant friction between age groups, a bursting at the seams.

THE CHALLENGES THAT COME WITH INCREASING LIFE EXPECTANCY

Increased life expectancy around the world does come with its own set of challenges, and these are widely known, for example: higher healthcare costs and more chronic disease, workforce shortages in healthcare industries including long-term care, and strains on the labor force and economic growth, to name a few. The challenges arise because the progress in life expectancy that has been achieved over the years has not been accompanied by the essential adjustment of mechanisms and institutions from the previous demographic context.

The research study points to three of the main areas of friction resulting from the vulnerability brought about by the demographic transition: ageism, disaffection, and poor accessibility. These frictions are even more germane in our business organizations because, for the first time, there are up to four generations sharing the same space: Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Centennials. Coexisting as they are, all these generations are affected.

Let's take the Baby Boomers (57-75 years), on whom ageism slaps a series of labels on workplace performance. Much of the attention is placed on how these older workers are often delegitimized despite their years of experience in the workforce. However, this phenomenon goes both ways – and ageism also affects the other generations. The youngest workers are often considered inexperienced and not serious, while those generations in between are, literally and figuratively, stuck in the middle and unable to move upwards yet still feel the prodding of the younger generations at their back. In short, this leads to workforce disaffection across the board in organizations.

WHERE THERE ARE CHALLENGES, THERE ARE SOLUTIONS

There is an obvious conclusion: it is of utmost importance to address the problems that come from the friction triggered by the current demographic transition. Workplace friction between generations stems from the age biases that constrain us in all parts and stages of our lives. Such social, economic, and emotional vulnerabilities weaken the fabric of society over time by excluding individuals who feel unable to contribute to a community where they no longer feel they belong.

This disaffection is compounded when the goods and services provided by society – services that exist in principle to make life easier – are not easily accessible. The unfortunate result is that individuals and age groups are increasingly isolated from each other.

The good news is that many communities and organizations in the countries of the study (Spain, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay) have identified these frictions as a problem to be dealt with and are tackling the challenges from an intergenerational standpoint. Drawing on focus groups conducted in each of the five countries, we have highlighted the following solutions:

1. Fighting ageism by building new narratives.
Intergenerational dialogues anchored in conversations that feature honesty and humility, and endeavor to educate all parties about different ages and life cycles, help to create new narratives. It also helps to take a broader look at emerging technologies and a more inclusive way of thinking about communities and organizations.

2. Overcoming disaffection through social and economic integration.
When the experience of older generations is combined with the eagerness for action of the younger generations, the result can be a rather successful blend – even, for example, ventures created by grandparents and grandchildren. In addition, companies can make structural changes that enable greater flexibility and allow the chance for everyone to work, in the way that they best can, towards the common goal.

3. Countering inaccessible products and policies with inclusivity.
When different age groups are finally working together towards a common goal, the result is often a mix of universal and targeted solutions that deliver accessibility for all. The point is that when all generations work together to create or improve a product or service, the end result is likely to ensure the proper inclusion of everyone.

This is the way forward for the whole of society: governments, media, organizations, universities, and each of us on an individual level, appreciating and acknowledging that life is a cycle in which every stage brings enrichment and that it is this enrichment which imbues our community with meaning. ///

*The report on which this article is based is a joint initiative by the IE Foundation's Observatory of Demography and Generational Diversity in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Lab, MAPFRE, Plan Mayor, and the SERES Foundation.

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The current global life expectancy is now just over 72 years, with women living longer than men. Ex: life expectancy in Spain at birth is 83.5 years and women over 80 years old account for 7.7% of the country's population.
- Scientific and social advancements have significantly extended the average life expectancy and allowed people to reach their later years in better conditions. The result of this is that we are currently living at a time in which multiple generations coexist.
- We are in a world designed for a different scenario, one that has already passed: higher healthcare costs and more chronic disease, workforce shortages in healthcare industries including long-term care, and strains on the labor force and economic growth.
- In the case of multiple generations, there will be significant friction between age groups.
- Solutions to combat this include: Fighting ageism by building new narratives, overcoming disaffection through social and economic integration, and Countering inaccessible products and policies with inclusivity.

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ROUTLEDGE CoBS FOCUS ON RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

About the Series

This series is published in collaboration with the Council on Business & Society (CoBS).

Routledge and COBS Focus on Responsible Business provides international and multicultural perspectives on responsible leadership and business practices in line with the UN SDGs. Contributors from 11 leading business schools on 5 continents offer local, cultural and global perspectives on the issues covered, drawing on high level research and transformed into engaging, and digestible content for students, academics and practitioners. Topics include but are not limited to; responsible finance and accounting, CSR and governance, supply chain management, leadership, diversity and inclusion, performance and innovation, responsible management, and wellbeing at work.

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